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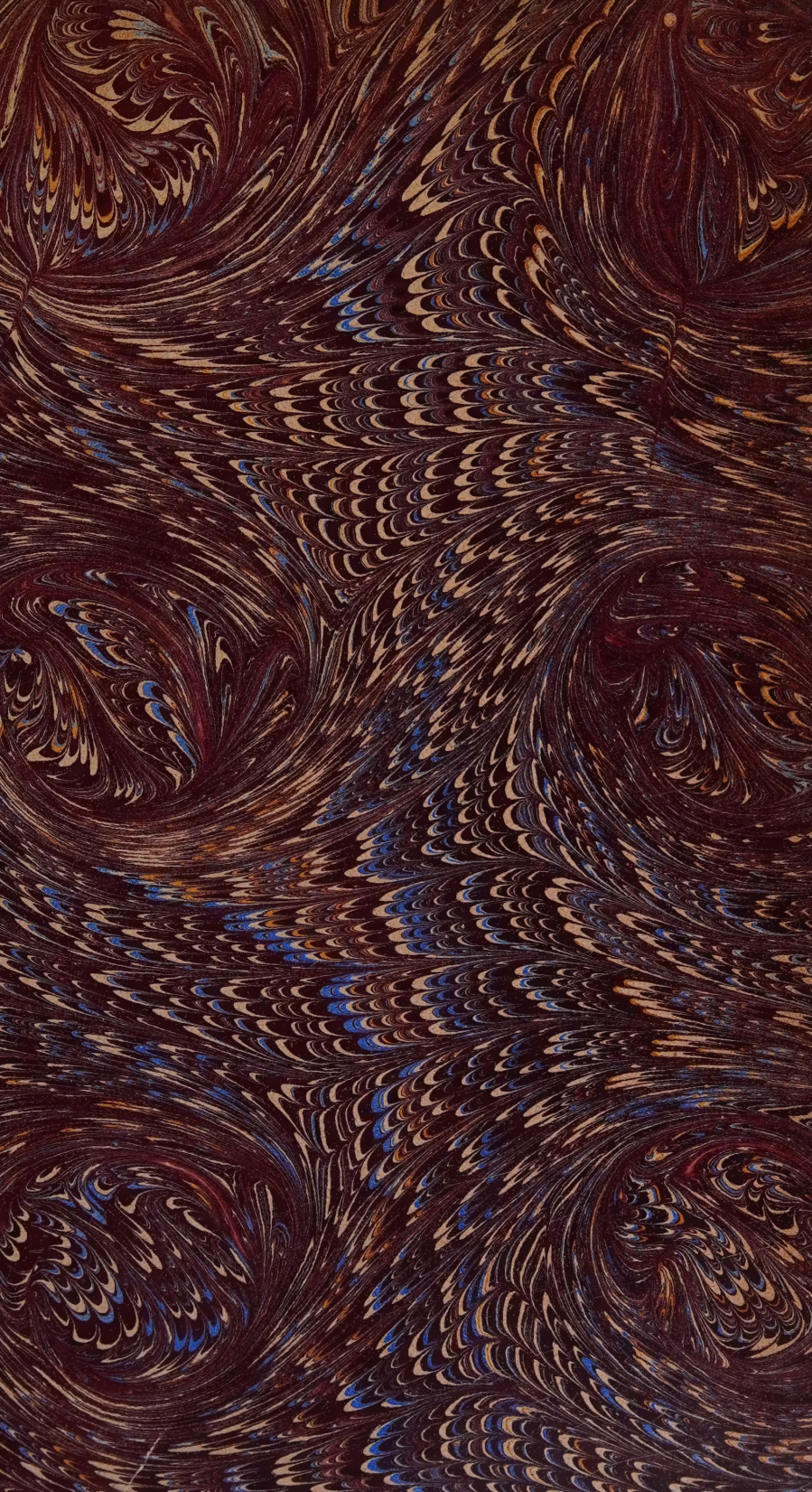

21st Nov. 1892.

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

Cabrini College Library
Radnor, Pa.

Fair Empress of the Poetic reign
And Queen of Poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon.
This humble pair of glasses
And fill them high with generous juice
As generous as your mind;
And pledge me in the generous toast
The whole of human kind!
To those who love us! A second fill.
But not to those whom we love;
Lest we love those who love not us!
A third - to thee & me, love!
Your
Clarinda
The Glasses presented by Burns to
Clarinda with the accompanying Verses

Burns and Clarinda

821
B4
V.5

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

(SELF-INTERPRETING)

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY ETCHINGS

AND WOOD CUTS, MAPS AND FACSIMILES

VOLUME V

PHILADELPHIA
GEBBIE & CO., PUBLISHERS

1995

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME V.

We have made a somewhat radical departure from our previous current arrangement, in this volume; inasmuch as we have lifted The Poet's Correspondence with Clarinda and with George Thomson entirely out of the chronological sequence of his works, and treated them as distinct episodes, rounded and complete in themselves,—adding to these his Remarks on Scottish Ballads and Songs, his two Common-place Books and the record of the Glenriddell MSS., now in the Athenæum Library, Liverpool.

The advantage of this arrangement will be manifest, because it simplifies the current stride in the record of his writings, poetry and prose, as carefully traced in the other five volumes, and enables us to give these two important episodes, of love-making with Clarinda, and song-making for Thomson, a rounded history and a perfect setting by themselves.

We have, in order to make the Thomson correspondence more valuable and attractive, copied from his collection the music, which he published in his original work, of all the songs published, written or revised by Burns.

In a work treated in chronological order, the difficulty of dealing with the Common-place Books which, of course, duplicate many of his earlier pieces, was a stumbling-block to our satisfaction, but, by placing them in kindred company with the Bard's Remarks on Scottish Ballads and Songs, in this volume of "*Specialties*," has relieved our difficulty, and, we believe, will give satisfaction to our readers.

G. G.

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A.D. 1787.

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PROSE WORKS.

THE CLARINDA CORRESPONDENCE.

In the beginning of December, 1787, after his return from the Highland tour, Burns met Mrs. M'Lehose (Clarinda) at the house of Miss Nimmo, Edinburgh, an elderly lady and an intimate friend of the poet's favorite, Peggy Chalmers. They were mutually attracted, and a correspondence began which has become famous. These letters were evidently never intended to meet the eye of the public, yet, from their fervid eloquence, they have attained world-wide celebrity.

In order that our readers may more clearly understand the position of Clarinda, socially, during the period of this correspondence, we copy a sketch of her life from the Memoir by her grandson, W. C. M'Lehose, published in 1843.

MEMOIR OF MRS. M'LEHOSE.

Mrs. M'Lehose, whose maiden name was Agnes Craig, was born in Glasgow in April 1759. She was the daughter of Mr. Andrew Craig, surgeon in that city—a gentleman of a good family. His brother was the Rev. William Craig, one of the ministers of Glasgow, and father of Lord Craig, a Judge of the Court of Session. The mother of Mrs. M'Lehose was a daughter of the Rev. John M'Laurin,—minister of Luss, and afterwards of St. David's, Glasgow. He was a brother of Colin M'Laurin, the celebrated mathematician and friend of Sir Isaac Newton.

Of the early years of Agnes Craig but little is recorded. She was so delicate in infancy, that it was hardly expected she would survive childhood. Yet, of four daughters and a son, she alone reached old age: all died in childhood except her sister Margaret, who, at the age of nineteen, became the wife of Captain Kennedy of Kailzie, and died about a year afterwards. The education of Agnes Craig was very incomplete,—as all female education was at that period, compared with the numerous advantages possessed by young people

of both sexes in the present day. All the education bestowed upon her was some very imperfect instruction in English grammar, and that laborious idleness called sampler-work; even spelling was much neglected. The disadvantages attending such an education she afterwards fully perceived, and partially remedied at a period of life when many women neglect the attainments previously acquired, and but few persevere in the cultivation of further knowledge.

Agnes lost her mother when she was only eight years old; and her only surviving sister, Mrs. Kennedy, dying about five years afterwards, she was deprived of that compensation for a mother's invaluable influence and superintendence, which might have been derived from an elder sister's counsels. Her mother's instructions, however, were not lost upon her; for many years afterwards she referred with heartfelt gratitude to the benefit she derived from the religious principles instilled into her by her "sainted mother."

Henceforward, till her marriage, she lived with the father, —except that, for half a year, when fifteen years old, she was sent to an Edinburgh boarding-school—a practice apparently prevalent in those days as well as now—to finish that education which could not be said to have been properly begun, and had no solid foundation. This circumstance originated an acquaintance which ended in her marriage. Even at this early age, she was considered one of the beauties of Glasgow, and was styled "the pretty Miss Nancy." Mr. James M'Lehose, a young man of respectable connexions, and a law agent in that city, had been disappointed in getting introduced to her; and when he learned that she was going to Edinburgh, he engaged all the seats in the stage-coach, excepting the one taken for her. At that period the coach took the whole day to perform the journey between the two cities, stopping a considerable time for dinner on the road, which thus afforded Mr. M'Lehose an excellent opportunity of making himself agreeable,—an opportunity which he took the utmost pains to improve, and with great success, being possessed of an agreeable and attractive person, and most insinuating manners. His deficiency of sound principle was hidden from general observation by great plausibility. After the return of "the pretty Miss Nancy" to Glasgow, Mr. M'Lehose followed up the acquaintance thus commenced, by paying her the most assiduous attention, and thus succeeded in winning her affections. Being young and inexperienced, deprived of the counsels of a mother and sister, and attached

to one whom she thought possessed of every virtue, and who had shown so decided a partiality to her in a manner peculiarly calculated to please a romantic mind,—she favorably received his addresses.

In this she was not encouraged by her friends, who thought that her beauty, talents, and connexions, entitled her to a superior match. However, she became Mrs. M'Lehose in July 1776, being then only seventeen years of age, and her husband five years her senior. Their union, she always stated, was the result of disinterested affection on both sides. But this connexion proved the bane of her happiness, and the source of all her misfortunes. Married at so early an age, before the vivacity of youth was passed, and, indeed, before it was fully developed, possessed of considerable personal attractions, a ready flow of wit, a keen relish for society, in which her conversational powers fitted her to excel, and a strong love of admiration, she appears to have displeased her husband, because she could not at once forego those enjoyments so natural to her time of life and situation. And he, without any cause, seems to have conceived the most unworthy jealousy, which led him to treat her with a severity most injudicious, and, to one of her disposition, productive of the worst consequences.

She soon discovered the mistaken estimate she had formed of her husband's character; and being of a high sanguine spirit, could ill brook the unmerited bad treatment she received. To use her own words, in a statement which she afterwards made for the advice of her friends—"Only a short time had elapsed ere I perceived, with inexpressible regret, that our dispositions, tempers, and sentiments, were so totally different, as to banish all hopes of happiness. Our disagreements rose to such a height, and my husband's treatment was so harsh, that it was thought advisable by my friends a separation should take place: which accordingly followed in December 1780."

Mrs. M'Lehose had at this period only two children living —having lost her first born. A fourth was born a few months after this separation. Soon after this event, her husband took her infant children away from her, in the hopes of thereby working on her maternal feelings, and forcing a reunion which she had firmly refused, being convinced that they could not live happily together. She parted with her children with extreme reluctance—her father being both able and willing to maintain her and them; while her husband had neglected

his business, and entered into every species of dissipation, so that he became unable to maintain his children, and they were distributed among his relations,—the youngest infant being, as soon as possible, removed from the tender care of his mother, and committed to the charge of a hireling nurse. He even prohibited her from seeing the children, to whom he knew she was devotedly attached. It required the utmost fortitude, on her part, to bear this cruel deprivation; but, by enduring it, she rendered her husband's cruel attempt abortive. All the children died young, except the late A. C. M'Lehose, W.S.

Immediately after the separation, she had returned to her father's house with her children, where she remained till his death, in the year 1782, two years afterwards. He judiciously left his property to be invested in an annuity for her behoof, entirely independent of her husband, and beyond his control; and feeling it unpleasant to remain in the same city with her husband and his relations, and yet in a state of alienation, Mrs. M'Lehose, by the advice of her friends, removed to Edinburgh in the same year, 1782.

Her husband followed her soon after, on his way to London, having formed an intention of going abroad. He solicited an interview in these terms—"Early to-morrow morning I leave this country for ever, and therefore wish much to pass one quarter of an hour with you. Upon my word of honor, my dearest Nancy, it is the last night you probably will ever have an opportunity of seeing me in this world." This appeal she refused for the following reasons:—"I consulted my friends: they advised me against seeing him; and as I thought it could be productive of no good, I declined the interview." The treatment she received from her husband while living with him, must have been bad indeed, to make one of her forgiving disposition so unyielding; and he seems to have been not altogether insensible to his misconduct: for, two years later, and just previous to going abroad, he wrote to his wife—"For my own part, I am willing to forget what is past: neither do I require any apology from you: for I am heartily sorry for those instances of my behavior to you which caused our separation. Were it possible to recall them, they should never be repeated." These feelings may have been sincere at the moment, but they had no depth or endurance.

Soon after Mr. M'Lehose went to London, in the year 1782, he wrote his wife a very reproachful letter, stating his intention of going abroad, and bidding her take her children home

to her. In this letter he observed—"The sooner you return to Glasgow the better, and take under your care and protection those endearing pledges of our once-happier days, as none of my friends will have anything to do with them." After speaking of his prospects of employment, he added—"Yet still, however remote my residence may be from you and those endearing infants, God forbid that I should be so destitute of natural affection for them, as to permit you or them, in the smallest degree, to be burdensome to any of your friends. On the contrary, I shall at all times observe the strictest economy, and exert myself to the uttermost, so that I may be enabled to contribute to your ease and happiness."

It will be seen in the sequel how this fair promise was observed. The truth is, that as he could not prevail on his wife to live with him, even by depriving her of her children to whom she was tenderly attached, and his relations would no longer support him in idleness, or his children for his sake, their sympathy for him being blunted, if not deadened, by his misconduct,—he thus contrived to throw the burden of them on his young wife, whose patrimonial income was very limited. Her situation at this trying period is thus related:—"The income left me by my father being barely sufficient to board myself, I was now distressed how to support my three infants. With my spirits sunk in deep dejection, I went to Glasgow to see them. I found arrears due for their board. This I paid; and the goodness of some worthy gentlemen in Glasgow procuring me a small annuity from the writers, and one from the surgeons, I again set out for Edinburgh with them in August 1782; and, by the strictest economy, made my little income go as far as possible. The deficiency was always supplied by some worthy benevolent friends, whose kindness no time can erase from my grateful heart."

When Mrs. M'Lehose settled in Edinburgh in 1782, though comparatively a stranger, her youth, beauty, and misfortunes, and, above all, her exemplary conduct, procured for her the friendship, not only of her own relations, but of many respectable families, till then unknown to her, from whom she received many substantial proofs of kindness. Thus, though deprived of his assistance, to which she had the most sacred claim, she had much reason to bless God for his goodness in raising up so many friends. Among these friends, Lord Craig,* her cousin-german, then an advocate at the Scottish

* Lord Craig was the eldest son of the Rev. Dr. Craig of Glasgow, and was born in the year 1745. He passed advocate in 1768; and after filling the offices

bar, is particularly deserving of mention. He befriended her from her first arrival in Edinburgh, and continued, during his life, her greatest benefactor. Mrs. M'Lehose consulted him on all occasions of difficulty; and when deprived of the annuities from Glasgow, soon after her husband settled in Jamaica, on account of his ability to maintain his children himself, Lord Craig generously continued them, and made up the deficiencies of her income. At his death he left her an annuity, and made her son residuary legatee. Besides these substantial acts of kindness, she enjoyed his friendship, and was a frequent visiter at his house, where the best literary society of Edinburgh used to assemble.

During Mrs. M'Lehose's early residence in Edinburgh, when she had not joined that social circle of which she soon became an ornament, she devoted much time and attention to remedying the defects of her early education. She improved her taste by the study of the best English authors, and became proficient in English composition. Possessed of a most retentive memory, she often quoted aptly from those authors, both in conversation and in her correspondence, which afterwards became extensive, and in which she excelled. It is to be regretted that so little of that correspondence has been preserved; but Mrs. M'Lehose having survived nearly all the friends of her early life, applications made in quarters where it was supposed her letters might have been preserved, have been unsuccessful.

It was at this period, also, that Mrs. M'Lehose began cultivating the Muses. She produced many short poetical effusions, a few of which have been preserved. Her earliest composition was an "Address to a Blackbird," which she heard singing on a tree near her residence, in the neighborhood of a spot where St. Margaret's Convent has since

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of Depute-advocate and Sheriff-depute of Ayrshire, he was raised to the bench in 1792, and succeeded Lord Henderland as Lord Commissioner of Justiciary in 1795. He died in 1813.

The *Scots Magazine* of that year says of him, "As a judge he was highly honorable and upright—endowed with persevering talents and a complete knowledge of his profession. Few men despatched more business with greater precision than Lord Craig.

"When at the bar, though considered an able counsel, his practice never was extensive—he was rather remarkable as a man attached to the Belles Lettres. He wrote more papers in the *Mirror* and *Lounger* than any other contributor except Henry Mackenzie.

"In private life he was gentle, affable, and unassuming, and in an eminent degree hospitable and benevolent. He possessed the warm esteem of a select circle of friends, to whom he was extremely attached."

been placed. The ideas, she stated, came into her mind like inspiration.

In the rearing and education of her children she took great delight; and the society of the many friends she acquired yielded her constant enjoyment for a long series of years, until the progress of time thinned their ranks, and increasing years and infirmities made her, in some degree, willing to relinquish social intercourse, of which she was so fond, for the retirement befitting old age. Among the literary men who used to visit her, Thomas Campbell, who was then prosecuting his studies at the University; the amiable Graham, the author of the "Sabbath;" James Gray, author of "Cuna of Cheyd," and "The Sabbath among the Mountains;" and Robert Ainslie, the friend of Burns, author of various religious works addressed to the young, and of a series of political letters,—may be enumerated. This gentleman proved throughout life a warm and steady friend. He was an original visiter at Mrs. M'Lehose's New-Year parties, which were kept up for about forty years, and are still remembered by several of the younger guests for their great conviviality, to which the liveliness and vivacity of the hostess greatly contributed.

Towards the end of the year 1787, Robert Burns was introduced to Mrs. M'Lehose, in the house of a mutual friend, Miss Nimmo. They spent the evening together; and we have the sentiments recorded by both parties of the impressions reciprocally produced. The poet declared, in one of his letters to her, "Of all God's creatures I ever could approach in the beaten way of friendship, you struck me with the deepest, the strongest, the most permanent impression." While she wrote:—"Miss Nimmo can tell you how earnestly I had long pressed her to make us acquainted. I had a presentiment that we would derive pleasure from the society of each other." The poet was at this time preparing to depart from Edinburgh; and, under these circumstances, could only regret that he had not possessed the opportunity of cultivating the lady's acquaintance earlier; but a severe accident, which happened a day or two later, when he was engaged to spend the evening with her, delayed his departure for some time, and led to a correspondence, in which Mrs. M'Lehose fancifully adopted the name of "Clarinda," and Burns followed up the idea by signing "Sylvander." As soon as he recovered from his accident, the poet visited the lady, and they enjoyed much of each other's society for several months, till he left Edinburgh. They met only once afterwards, in the year 1791,—but

occasionally corresponded till within a short period of his death.

When Mr. M'Lehose went to London in 1782, he found too many opportunities for indulging in dissipation and extravagance to go abroad so long as he was able to procure money from his family in Scotland,—assistance which they could ill afford, and were obliged, finally, to refuse, their patience and generosity being exhausted. After two years and a half thus spent in idleness, Mr. M'Lehose was thrown into prison for debt; and his relatives, being once more appealed to, consented to advance the funds necessary for his release and outfit, on condition that he immediately went abroad. With this he complied, and sailed for Jamaica, in November 1784. Before leaving London, and afterwards from Jamaica, where he became very prosperous, he wrote his mother and family most grateful letters for their kindness, but never repaid the debt, though appealed to, when his mother's income became inadequate to her support.

Mr. M'Lehose did not favor his wife even with grateful letters; though she wrote him repeatedly respecting her circumstances and the health of their children. The following appeal to him, from Lord Craig, was equally fruitless:—"I write you this letter to represent to you the situation of your family here. Your wife's father left some property in Glasgow, the interest of which your wife draws for the support of herself and children; but this not being sufficient, by the solicitation of some of your friends £8 a-year was obtained from the surgeons, and £10 a-year from the writers in Glasgow. Even this, however, did not do, owing to the great rise in the expense of housekeeping, and the necessary outlay for your children, and their education; so that I advanced money to Mrs. M., even while she got the above sums. Accounts, I am informed, have lately arrived from Jamaica which I am very glad of, representing you to be in a very good situation, and as having got into very profitable business. The surgeons and writers have withdrawn their allowance; and I have been told their principal reason for doing so, is the accounts they have heard of the goodness of your situation. No remittances, however, have, as yet, come from you; and in this last year, owing to the withdrawal of the writers and surgeons, I have paid Mrs M'Lehose upwards of £30 above what I have received. No person, except my brother, is willing to contribute anything; and all your own relations have positively refused, from the beginning, to contribute a single farthing. In this

situation I am resolved to advance no more money out of my own funds on the account of your family. What I have already given, I have never laid my account in being reimbursed, and it shall never more be thought of; but for the future, every consideration demands that you should yourself contribute for the support of your own children. I expect, therefore, that you will, by the first opportunity, write to some of your correspondents in this country, giving what directions you think proper about your children, and making some proper remittance on their account; as, I repeat it again, I am determined not to continue to pay money on their account."

In Mrs. M'Lehose's narrative she states:—"About the year 1787, my youngest boy William fell into ill health. This increased my expense; and, at this period, the annuities from Glasgow were withheld from me; the reason assigned being, that Mr. M'Lehose was doing well, and in a way to support his children himself. I wrote once more to him, giving him an account of his children, particularly of William's helpless situation, and also my reduced circumstances, warmly expostulating with him on the duty and necessity of remitting for their support and education. I anxiously waited for an answer, but received none. In August 1788, my delicate child was happily delivered from his sufferings. I wrote again immediately of his death. Still I received no answer till the following August, when I had a letter, and, soon after, another, inviting me to come out to Jamaica, and enclosing a bill for £50, which was meant, I suppose, to equip me; and containing the most flattering directions to give his only surviving son the best education Edinburgh would afford."

"With regard to my dear son," Mr. M'Lehose writes, "it is my wish that he should be placed in the first boarding-school for young gentlemen, either in Edinburgh or its environs: whatever expense may attend it, shall be regularly and punctually paid. It is my wish that he should continue at the Latin until he is perfect master of that language; and, when that is accomplished, I wish him to be instructed in the French, which is now become so generally useful all over the globe, and, in particular, here, where I intend to fix him in business. It will be proper, also, that he be immediately put under a dancing-master; and, what is still more requisite, that he should learn to fence. No expense can be incurred that will not be discharged with infinite pleasure and satisfaction, provided he is to benefit by it as I could wish. If you have no inclination to come out to this country, I then have to re-

quest you to embrace the first opportunity to inform me of such determination; as in that case I will immediately order my son up to London, and put him under the care of one of the first West India houses in the city, to receive the remainder of his education either at Westminster or at Eton, whichever they think most advisable."

* Mrs. M'Lehose was much at a loss how to act. At first she felt strongly inclined to remain in this country, but finally resolved to proceed to Jamaica. "I consulted my friends; they declined giving any advice, and referred me to my own mind. After much agitation, and deep and anxious reflection for my only child's sake, for whom he promised such liberal things and encouraged by flattering accounts of his character and conduct in Jamaica, I resolved to undertake the arduous voyage."

The motives which influenced her will best be seen from the letter which she wrote to her friend Lord Craig, upon the subject. "When I wrote you last, the bidding adieu to my dear boy was my only source of anxiety. I had then no idea whatever of going out to Mr. M'Lehose. Next day I learned from Mrs. Adair that Captain Liddel told her my husband had the strongest resolution of using me kindly, in case I accepted of his invitation; and that pride alone hindered his acknowledging his faults a second time, still hurt at my not answering his overtures of reconciliation from London. But that, in case I did not choose to come over, I might rest assured I never would hear from him while he existed. Captain Liddel added his opinion, that I ought to go, in the strongest terms. Mrs. Adair joins him; and, above all, my poor boy adds his entreaties most earnestly. I thought it prudent to inform him, for the first time, of the disagreement between his parents, and the unhappy jealousy in his father's temper. Still he argues that his father may be incensed at my refusal. If I go I have a terror of the sea, and no less of the climate; above all, the horror of again involving myself in misery in the midst of strangers, and almost without remedy. If I refuse, I must bid my only child (in whom all my affections and hopes are entirely centred) adieu for ever; struggle with a straitened income and the world's censure solitary and unprotected. The bright side of these alternatives is, that if I go my husband's jealousy of temper may be abated, from a better knowledge of the world; and time and misfortunes, by

* By this time Burns was married and settled at Ellisland—and this no doubt had something to do with the course she determined upon.

making alterations both on person and vivacity, will render me less likely to incur his suspicions; and that ill humor, which partly arose from straitened fortune, will be removed by affluence. I will enjoy my son's society, and have him for a friend; and who knows what effect so fine a boy may have on a father long absent from his sight. If I refuse, and stay here, I shall continue to enjoy a circle of kind, respectable friends. Though my income be small, I can never be in want; and I shall maintain that liberty which, after nine years' enjoyment, I shall find it hard to forego, even to the degree to which I am sensible every married woman must submit."

A few days later she wrote again to the same gentleman. "On Friday last I went down to Leith, and had a conversation on board the Roselle with Captain Liddel. He told me that Mr. M'Lehose had talked of me, and of my coming over, with great tenderness; and said, it would be my fault if we did not enjoy great happiness; and concluded with assuring me, if I were his own child he would advise me to go out. This conversation has tended greatly to decide my accepting my husband's invitation. I have done what you desired me,—weighed coolly (as coolly as a subject so interesting would permit) all I have to suffer or expect in either situation; and the result is, my going to Jamaica. This appears to me the preferable choice: it is surely the path of duty; and as such, I may look for the blessing of God to attend my endeavors for happiness with him who was the husband of my choice, and the father of my children. On Saturday I was agreeably surprised by a call from Mr. Kemp. He had received my letter that morning at Glasgow, and had alighted for a few minutes, on his way to Easter Duddingston, where his family are for summer quarters. He was much affected with my perplexing situation. Like you, he knew not how to decide, and left me, promising to call early this day, which he has done. I told him of the meeting with Mr. Liddel, and enumerated all the arguments which I had thought of on both sides of the question. What Mr. Liddel (who is a man of known worth) said to me weighed much with him; and he, too, is now of opinion my going to Jamaica is advisable. He gave me much good advice as to my conduct towards Mr. M'Lehose, and promised to write him himself. Your letter luckily arrived while he was with me. The assurance of my little income being secured me, not a little adds both to his opinion of the propriety of my going, and to my ease and comfort, in case (after doing all I can) it should prove impossible to enjoy that

peace which I so earnestly pant after; and I would fain hope for a tender reception. After ten years' separation, and the sacrifice I make of bidding adieu (probably for ever) to my friends and my country—indeed, I am much depressed in mind—should I escape the sea, the climate may prove fatal to me; but should it happen so, I have the satisfaction to think I shall die in attempting to attain happiness in that path of duty which Providence and a succession of events seem to point out for the best. You, my dear kind benefactor, have had much trouble with me first and last; and though others appear ungrateful, neither time nor absence can ever erase from my heart the remembrance of your past kindness. My prayers shall ascend for the reward of heaven upon your head! To-morrow I am to write to my husband. Mr. Kemp is to see it on Wednesday. If any person occurs to you as proper to place Andrew with in Edinburgh, let me know—the sooner the better: the hopes of his rejoining me will help to console my mind in the midst of strangers. I am sorry you are to be so long of coming to town. Meantime I shall be glad to hear from you: for I am, my dear Sir, in every possible situation, your affectionate and obliged friend, A. M."

"I accordingly wrote my husband in October 1791, acquainting him with my resolution of forgetting past differences, and throwing myself on his protection." As the Roselle did not leave for Jamaica till spring, she again wrote him in December.

After giving the details of the arrangements she had made for their son's education, in compliance with his instructions, she thus proceeds:—"I had occasion to be in Glasgow lately for two days only. I called for your mother. I felt much for her—bereaved of so many children. The peculiar circumstances which attended poor Annie's death affected me excessively. They told me you had not written these three years past; but I assured them (and I hope it is the case) that your letters must have miscarried, as I could not believe you capable of such unkind neglect. I am certain, inclination, no less than duty, must ever prompt you to pay attention to your mother. She has met with many and sore afflictions; and I feel for her the most sincere sympathy." In the same letter, she adds:—"I have met with much kindness since I came to Edinburgh, from a set of most agreeable and respectable friends. No ideas of wealth or splendor could compensate for the pain I shall feel in bidding them adieu. Nothing could support me but the fond reliance I have of gaining your af-

fections and confidence. To possess these is the dearest wish of my heart; and I trust the Almighty will grant this my ardent desire. I would fain hope to hear from you ere I sail; a kind letter from you would prove a balm to my soul during the anxieties of a tedious voyage."

Mrs. M'Lehose sailed from Leith in February 1792, and arrived at Kingston in April following. The day before her departure she received a letter from her fickle husband, dissuading her from going out, on the pretence that the yellow fever prevailed in the island, and that a revolt had taken place among the negroes; both of which statements were false. But, having taken leave of her friends, engaged her passage, and made the preparations which the expectation of an absence, prolonged perhaps for years, required, she resolved (unwisely, as the event proved) to proceed. It is a curious coincidence that the vessel she sailed in was the "Roselle," the same in which Burns intended to have sailed for the same destination a few years earlier.

Mrs. M'Lehose suffered much from the voyage, especially in the warmer latitudes; and when she reached Kingston, her husband did not go down to the ship for a length of time. All the other lady passengers had been speedily joined by their friends. When he came, he was very cold, and seemed far from being glad to see his wife; and even in this interview, before they left the ship, he used some harsh expressions towards her in presence of the captain and others, which wounded her feelings much.

"As my constitution never agreed with heat, I felt its bad effects as soon as we had crossed the Line; but the very cold reception I received from Mr. M'Lehose on landing, gave me a shock which, joined to the climate, deranged my mind to such a degree as made me not answerable for what I either said or did. My husband's after-kindness could not remove the complication of nervous disorders which seized me. They increased to such a height that Dr. Fife, the professional gentleman who attended me, and whose soothing manner I can never forget, was of opinion my going home was absolutely necessary—otherwise my reason, if not my life, would fall a sacrifice. Accordingly, in June I took leave of Mr. M'Lehose, and returned home in the ship I had gone out in. Our parting was most affectionate. On my part, it was with sincere regret that my health obliged me to leave him. Upon his, it was to all appearance equally so. However, we parted with mutual promises of constancy, and of keeping up a

regular correspondence. After getting into cool air, I gradually recovered my health."

There were other reasons for leaving Jamaica besides those which she mentioned in the statement just quoted. Mr. M'Lehose, like most West Indian planters, had a family by a colored mistress. This could not be otherwise than a source of mortification and annoyance. The ebullition of temper which he had exhibited towards her on their first meeting, was a prelude to more violent outbreaks, which, though not always directed to her personally, paralyzed her with fear. His slaves were generally the objects of these fits of wrath; and seeing that his wife pitied their abject condition, he took pleasure in threatening and abusing them in her presence.

Circumstances were thus most unfavorable to Mrs. M'Lehose's stay in Jamaica; but, had they been propitious, she was ill calculated to endure a permanent change of habits. That she was undoubtedly very unhappy in the West Indies, may be gathered from the following extract from her Journal many years afterwards:—"Recollect that I arrived in Jamaica this day twenty-two years. What I suffered during the three months I remained there! Lord make me grateful for thy goodness in bringing me back to my native country!"

Mrs. M'Lehose arrived in Edinburgh in August 1792, and soon after resumed housekeeping, and took home her son, who had been placed at Dr. Chapman's excellent boarding-school. The first year had now expired, without any part of the expense being defrayed by his father; and the debt was ultimately cancelled by the liberality of Lord Craig. As Mr. M'Lehose continued thus utterly to neglect his wife and son, she was prevailed on by her friends to institute proceedings against him before the Court of Session, in order to enforce these obligations. In March 1797, accordingly, she obtained a judgment of the Court, ordaining him to pay her a yearly aliment of £100 sterling. From that judgment the following is an extract:—"In the close of the year 1784, Mr. M'Lehose settled as an attorney-at-law, in Kingston, Jamaica; and business increased so rapidly, that he was soon in possession of, and still enjoys, a revenue of £1000 a-year from his profession."[1]

This decree, however, owing to Mr. M'Lehose being resident in Jamaica, did not add to Mrs. M'Lehose's income; although it was the means ultimately of enabling her to recover, in this country, some funds belonging to her husband.

Thus abandoned by her husband, Mrs. M'Lehose and her only son, the late Mr. Andrew M'Lehose, W.S., continued to

live together. Soon after her return from Jamaica, Mr. Robert Ainslie the friend of Burns, kindly took her son as apprentice. He continued to live with his mother until the year 1809, when he married. They lived most happily together; and probably there have been few instances of more devoted mutual attachment between parent and child.

In March 1812, Mr. M'Lehose died at Kingston; and, though he had been in receipt of a large income for many years, as Chief Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas in Jamaica, no funds were ever received from that island by his family. A report reached this country, as being a matter of notoriety in Kingston, that some of his *particular friends* had, on the approach of death, sent all his domestics out of the house; and, as soon as the breath quitted his body, carried off whatever cash and documents there were. If so, the friends proved befitting the man. Notice, however, was given to Mrs. M'Lehose that a balance of several hundred pounds, belonging to her husband, was in the hands of Messrs. Coutts in London, which she soon afterwards obtained.

It was then discovered that he had had an account current at this bank for many years, while he had suffered his family to have their income eked out by the generosity of friends: £50 advanced to her, as already mentioned, before she sailed for Jamaica, and a present of £21 on leaving that island, being all which this wealthy husband bestowed on his family in the long period of thirty-two years. Yet, after her departure from Jamaica, he was in the habit of speaking of his family with great affection, and boasted of the valuable presents which he had made his wife and son. It is known that he was a man of talents and pleasing address, but his temper was occasionally violent and ungovernable. Yet he was often soft and agreeable. His written correspondence shewed the same characteristics—alternate passages of the most endearing and the most insulting language.

[We refer the reader back to page 1 of this vol., recalling the circumstances under which the correspondence which has its commencement on the next page began.]

(1) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Dec.* 6, 1787.]*

MADAM,—I had set no small store by my tea-drinking to-night, and have not often been so disappointed. On Saturday evening I shall embrace the opportunity with the greatest pleasure. I leave this town on this day se'enight, and probably for a couple of twelvemonths; but must ever regret that I so lately got an acquaintance whom I shall ever highly esteem, and in whose welfare I shall ever be warmly interested.

Our worthy common friend, in her usual pleasant way, rallied me a good deal on my new acquaintance, and in the humor of her ideas I wrote some lines, which I inclose you, as I think they have a good deal of poetic merit;† and Miss Nimmo tells me you are not only a critic but a poetess. Fiction, you know, is the native region of poetry; and I hope you will pardon my vanity in sending you the bagatelle as a tolerable off-hand *jeu-d'esprit.* I have several poetic trifles which I shall gladly leave with Miss Nimmo, or you, if they were worth house-room; as there are scarcely two people on earth by whom it would mortify me more to be forgotten, though at the distance of ninescore miles.—I am, Madam, with the highest respect, your very humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

Thursday Evening.

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*Dates within brackets are given from internal evidence, and some memoranda, made in 1802, by Mrs. M'Lehose's son. The dating here occasionally varies from that of her grandson referred to above.

†These lines by Burns, which he commends in a style so unwonted when speaking of his own work, seem not to have been preserved.

Clarinda——

(2) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[DEC. 8, 1787.]

I CAN say, with truth, Madam, that I never met with a person in my life whom I more anxiously wished to meet again than yourself. To-night I was to have had that very great pleasure—I was intoxicated with the idea; but an unlucky fall from a coach has so bruised one of my knees, that I can't stir my leg off the cushion: so if I don't see you again, I shall not rest in my grave for chagrin. I was vexed to the soul I had not seen you sooner; I am determined to cultivate your friendship with the enthusiasm of Religion; but thus has Fortune ever served me. I cannot bear the idea of leaving Edinburgh without seeing you. I know not how to account for it—I am strangely taken with some people; nor am I often mistaken. You are a stranger to me; but I am an odd being; some yet unnamed feelings—things, not principles, but better than whims—carry me farther than boasted reason ever did a Philosopher. Farewell! every happiness be yours!

ROBT. BURNS.

Saturday Evening,
St. James' Square, No. 2.

(1) MRS. M'LEHOSE TO ROBERT BURNS.

(CLAR. CORR. 1843.)

Saturday Ev. [*Dec.* 8, 1787.]

ENURED as I have been to disappointments, I never felt more, nay, nor half so severely, for one of the same nature! The cruel cause, too, augments my uneasiness. I trust you'll soon recover it; meantime, if my sympathy, my friendship, can alleviate your pain, be assured you possess them. I am

much flattered at being a favorite of yours. Miss Nimmo can tell you how earnestly I had long pressed her to make us acquainted. I had a presentiment that we should derive pleasure from the society of each other. To-night I had thought of fifty things to say to you; how unfortunate this prevention! Do not accuse Fortune; had I not known she was *blind* before, her ill-usage of *you* had marked it sufficiently. However, she is a fickle, old, envious beldame, and I'd much rather be indebted to *Nature*. You shall *not* leave town without seeing me, if I should come along with good Miss Nimmo and call for you. I am determined to see you; and am ready to exclaim with Yorick, "Tut! are we not all relations?" We are, indeed, *strangers* in one sense; but of near kin in many respects: these "nameless feelings" I perfectly comprehend, tho' the pen of a Locke could not define them. Perhaps *instinct* comes nearer their description than either "Principles or Whims." Think ye they have any connection with that "heavenly light which leads astray?" One thing I know, that they have a powerful effect upon me; and are delightful when under the check of *reason* and *religion*.

Miss Nimmo was a favorite of mine from the first hour I met her. There is a softness, a nameless something about her that, were I a man, old as she is, I would have chosen her before most women that I know. I fear, however, this liking is not *mutual*. I'll tell you why I think so, at meeting. She was in mere jest when she told you I was a *Poetess*. I have often composed rhyme, (if not *reason*), but never one line of *poetry*. The distinction is obvious to every one of the least discernment. Your lines were truly poetical; give me all you can spare. Not one living has a higher relish for poetry than I have; and my reading everything of the kind makes me a tolerable judge. Ten years ago, such lines from such a hand would have half-turned my head. Perhaps you thought it might have done so even *yet*, and wisely premised that "Fiction was the native region of poetry." Read the enclosed, which I scrawled just after reading yours.* Be sincere, and own that, whatever merit it has, it has not a line resembling poetry. Pardon any little freedoms I take with you; if they entertain a heavy hour, they have all the merit I intended. Will you let me know, now and then, how your leg is? If I was your *sister*, I would call and see you; but 'tis a censorious

* Neither do Clarinda's lines in reply to those of Burns seem to have been preserved.

world this, and [in this sense] "you and I are not of this world." Adieu. Keep up your heart, you will soon get well, and we shall *meet*. Farewell. God bless you! A. M.

(1) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Dec.* 12, 1787.]

I STRETCH a point indeed, my dearest Madam, when I answer your card on the rack of my present agony. Your friendship, Madam! By heavens, I was never proud before. Your lines, I maintain it, are poetry, and good poetry: mine were indeed partly fiction, and partly a friendship which, had I been so blest as to have met with you *in time*, might have led me—God of love only knows where. Time is too short for ceremonies.

I swear solemnly—in all the tenor of my former oath—to remember you in all the pride and warmth of friendship until—I cease to be!*

To-morrow, and every day, till I see you, you shall hear from me.

Farewell! May you enjoy a better night's repose than I am likely to have. R. B.

(2) MRS. M'LEHOSE TO ROBERT BURNS.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Sunday Noon, Dec.* 16, 1787.]

MISS NIMMO and I had a long conversation last night. Little did I suspect that she was of the party. Gentle, sweet soul! She is accusing herself as the cause of your misfortune. It was in vain I rallied her upon such an excess of sensibility

* And he did remember her till he died. And she remembered him long, long after he was dead.

—as I termed it. She is lineally descended from "My Uncle Toby;" has hopes of the devil, and would not hurt a fly. How could you tell me that you were in "agony?" I hope you will swallow laudanum, and procure some ease from sleep. I am glad to hear Mr. Wood attends you. He is a good soul, and a safe surgeon. I know him a little. Do as he bids, and I trust your leg will soon be quite well. When I meet you, I must chide you for writing in your romantic style. Do you remember that she whom you address is a married woman? or—Jacob-like—would you wait seven years, and even then perhaps be disappointed, as he was? No; I know you better: you have too much of that impetuosity which generally accompanies noble minds. To be serious, most people would think, by your style, that you were writing to some vain, silly woman to make a fool of her — or worse. I have too much vanity to ascribe it to the former motive, and too much charity to harbor an idea of the latter; and viewing it as the effusion of a benevolent heart upon meeting one similar to itself, I have promised you my friendship: it will be your own fault if I ever withdraw it. Would to God I had it in my power to give you some solid proofs of it! Were I the Duchess of Gordon, you should be possessed of that independence which every generous mind pants after; but I fear she is "no Duchess at the heart." Obscure as I am (comparatively) I enjoy all the necessaries of life as fully as I desire, and wish for wealth only to procure the "luxury of doing good."

My chief design in writing you to-day was to beg you would not write me often, lest the exertion should hurt you. Meantime, if my scrawls can amuse you in your confinement, you shall have them occasionally. I shall hear of you every day from my beloved Miss Nimmo. Do you know, the very first time I was in her house, most of our conversation was about a certain (lame) poet? I read her soul in her expressive countenance, and have been attached to her ever since. Adieu! Be patient. Take care of yourself, My best wishes attend you. A. M.

(4) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Thurs. Dec.* 20, 1787.]

YOUR last, my dear Madam, had the effect on me, that Job's situation had on his friends, when "they sat down seven days and seven nights astonished, and spake not a word."—"Pay my addresses to a married woman!" I started as if I had seen the ghost of him I had injured. I recollected my expressions; some of them indeed were, in the law phrase, "habit and repute," which is being half guilty. I cannot possibly say, Madam, whether my heart might not have gone astray a little; but I can declare, upon the honor of a poet, that the vagrant has wandered unknown to me. I have a pretty handsome troop of follies of my own; and, like some other people's, they are but undisciplined blackguards: but the luckless rascals have something like honor in them; they would not do a dishonest thing.

To meet with an unfortunate woman, amiable and young, deserted and widowed by those who were bound by every tie of duty, nature, and gratitude, to protect, comfort, and cherish her; add to all, when she is perhaps one of the first of lovely forms and noble minds—the mind, too, that hits one's taste as the joys of Heaven do a saint—should a vague idea, the natural child of imagination, thoughtlessly peep over the fence—were you, my friend, to sit in judgment, and the poor, airy straggler brought before you, trembling, self-condemned, with artless eyes, brimful of contrition, looking wistfully on its judge—you could not, my dear Madam, condemn the hapless wretch to death "without benefit of clergy?"

I won't tell you what reply my heart made to your

raillery of "seven years," but I will give you what a brother of my trade says on the same allusion :—

"The patriarch to gain a wife,
Chaste, beautiful and young,
Serv'd fourteen years a painful life,
And never thought it long.

O were you to reward such cares,
And life so long would stay;
Not fourteen but four hundred years
Would seem but as one day!"*

I have written you this scrawl because I have nothing else to do, and you may sit down and find fault with it, if you have no better way of consuming your time; but finding fault with the vagaries of a poet's fancy is much such another business as Xerxes chastising the waves of Hellespont.

My limb now allows me to sit in some peace; to walk I have yet no prospect of, as I can't mark it to the ground.

I have just now looked over what I have written, and it is such a chaos of nonsense that I dare say you will throw it into the fire, and call me an idle, stupid fellow; but whatever you may think of my brains, believe me to be, with the most sacred respect and heartfelt esteem, My dear Madam, your humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

(3) TO MR. ROBERT BURNS.

(BRIGHT'S "Glenriddell MSS.")

ON BURNS SAYING HE "HAD NOTHING ELSE TO DO."

When first you saw *Clarinda's* charms,
What rapture in your bosom grew!
Her heart was shut to Love's alarms,
But then—you'd nothing else to do.

* Tom D'Urfey's 2nd Vol. of Songs, p. 37, London, 1719.

Apollo oft had lent his harp,
But now 'twas strung from Cupid's bow;
You sung—it reach'd *Clarinda's* heart—
She wish'd you'd nothing else to do.

Fair Venus smil'd, Minerva frown'd,
Cupid observ'd—the arrow flew:
Indifference, ere a week went round,
Show'd you had nothing else to do.

(Three other verses were added, of inferior merit.)

Christmas Eve, 1787. CLARINDA.

(5) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART 1802.)

[*Dec.* 28, 1787.]

WHEN dear Clarinda, matchless fair,
First struck Sylvander's raptur'd view,
He gaz'd, he listened to despair,
Alas! 'twas all he dared to do.

Love, from Clarinda's heavenly eyes,
Transfixed his bosom thro' and thro';
But still in Friendship's guarded guise,
For more the demon fear'd to do.

That heart, already more than lost,
The imp beleagur'd all *perdue;*
For frowning Honor kept his post—
To meet that frown he shrunk to do.

His pangs the bard refused to own,
Tho' half he wish'd Clarinda knew;
But Anguish wrung the unweeting groan—
Who blames what frantic Pain must do?

That heart, where motley follies blend,
  Was sternly still to Honor true:
To prove Clarinda's fondest friend,
  Was what a lover sure might do.

The Muse his ready quill employed,
  No nearer bliss he could pursue;
That bliss Clarinda cold deny'd—
  "Send word by Charles how you do!"

The chill behest disarm'd his muse,
  Till passion, all impatient grew:
He wrote, and hinted for excuse,
  'Twas, 'cause "he'd nothing else to do."

But by those hopes I have above!
  And by those faults I dearly rue!
The deed, the boldest mark of love,
  For thee, that deed I dare to do!

O could the Fates but name the price
  Would bless me with your charms and you!
With frantic joy I'd pay it thrice,
  If human art and power could do!

Then take, Clarinda, friendship's hand,
  (Friendship, at least, I may avow;)
And lay no more your chill command,
  I'll write, whatever I've to do.

SYLVANDER.

I beg your pardon, my dear "Clarinda," for the fragment scrawl I sent you yesterday. I really don't know what I wrote. A gentleman, for whose character, abilities, and critical knowledge, I have the highest veneration, called in just as I had begun the

second sentence, and I would not make the porter wait.* I read to my much-respected friends several of my own bagatelles, and, among others, your lines, which I had copied out. He began some criticism on them as on the other pieces, when I informed him they were the work of a young lady in this town; which, I assure you, made him stare. My learned friend seriously protested, that he did not believe any young woman in Edinburgh was capable of such lines; and, if you know anything of Professor Gregory, you will neither doubt of his abilities nor his sincerity. I do love you, if possible, still better for having so fine a taste and turn for poesy. I have again gone wrong in my usual unguarded way, but you may erase the word, and put esteem, respect, or any other tame Dutch expression you please, in its place. I believe there is no holding converse, or carrying on correspondence, with an amiable woman, much less a *gloriously amiable fine woman*, without some mixture of that delicious passion, whose most devoted slave I have more than once had the honor of being—But why be hurt or offended on that account? Can no honest man have a prepossession for a fine woman, but he must run his head against an intrigue? Take a little of the tender witchcraft of love, and add it to the generous, the honorable sentiments of manly friendship; and I know but *one* more delightful morsel, which few, few in any rank ever taste. Such a composition is like adding cream to strawberries: it not only gives the fruit a more elegant richness, but has a peculiar deliciousness of its own.

I enclose you a few lines I composed on a late melancholy occasion. I will not give above five or six copies of it at all; and I would be hurt if any friend should give any copies without my consent.†

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*This refers to a short letter (now lost) accompanying the verses, in reply to Clarinda's lines.

† The lines here referred to were those "On the death of Lord President Dundas."

Gabriel College Library
Paper 23.

You cannot imagine, Clarinda (I like the idea of Arcadian names in a commerce of this kind), how much store I have set by the hopes of your future friendship. I don't know if you have a just idea of my character, but I wish you to see me *as I am.* I am, as most people of my trade are, a strange Will-o'-wisp being; the victim, too frequently, of much imprudence and many follies. My great constituent elements are *pride* and *passion:* the first I have endeavored to humanize into integrity and honor; the last makes me a devotee, to the warmest degree of enthusiasm, in love, religion, or friendship—either of them, or all together, as I happen to be inspired. 'Tis true I never saw you but once; but how much acquaintance did I form with you in that once! Do not think I flatter you, or have a design upon you, Clarinda: I have too much pride for the one, and too little cold contrivance for the other; but of all God's creatures I ever could approach in the beaten way of acquaintance, you struck me with the deepest, the strongest, the most permanent impression. I say the most permanent, because I know myself well, and how far I can promise either on my prepossessions or powers. Why are you unhappy? And why are so many of our fellow-creatures, unworthy to belong to the same species with you, blest with all they can wish? You have a hand all benevolent to give; why were you denied the pleasure? You have a heart formed, gloriously formed for all the most refined luxuries of love; why was that heart ever wrung? O Clarinda! Shall we not meet in a state, some yet unknown state of being, where the lavish hand of Plenty shall minister to the highest wish of Benevolence; and where the chill north wind of Prudence shall never blow over the flowery fields of Enjoyment? If we do not, man was made in vain! I deserved most of the unhappy hours that have lingered over my head; they were the wages of my labor;

but what unprovoked demon, malignant as hell, stole upon the confidence of unmistrusting busy fate, and dashed your cup of life with undeserved sorrow?

Let me know how long your stay will be out of town: I shall count the hours till you inform me of your return. Cursed *etiquette* forbids your seeing me just now; and so soon as I can walk, I must bid Edinburgh adieu. Lord! why was I born to see misery, which I cannot relieve; and to meet with friends, whom I can't enjoy? I look back with the pang of unavailing avarice on my loss in not knowing you sooner: all last winter, these three months past, what luxury of intercourse have I not lost! Perhaps though, 'twas better for my peace. You see I am either above, or incapable of, dissimulation. I believe it is want of that particular genius. I despise design, because I want either coolness or wisdom to be capable of it. I am interrupted. Adieu, my dear Clarinda!

SYLVANDER.

Friday Evening.

(4) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Friday Evening, Dec.* 28, 1787.]

I go to the country early to-morrow morning, but will be home by Tuesday—sooner than I expected. I have not time to answer yours as it deserves; nor, had I the age of Methusalem, could I answer it in kind. I shall grow *vain*. Your praises were enough—but those of a Dr. Gregory superadded! Take care, many a "glorious woman" has been undone by having her head turned. "*Know you!*" I know you far better than you do me. Like yourself, I am a bit of an enthusiast. In religion and friendship quite a bigot—perhaps I could be so in love too; but everything dear to me in heaven and earth forbids! This is my fixed principle; [and] the person who would dare to endeavor at removing it I would hold them as my chief enemy. Like you, I am incapable

of dissimulation; nor am I, as you suppose, unhappy. Possessed of fine children, competence, fame, friends kind and attentive—what a monster of ingratitude should I be in the eye of Heaven were I to style myself unhappy!* True, I have met with scenes horrible to recollection, even at six years' distance; but adversity, my friend, is allowed to be the school of Virtue. It oft confers that chastened softness which is unknown among the favorites of Fortune! Even a mind possessed of natural sensibility, without this, never feels that exquisite pleasure which nature has annexed to our sympathetic sorrows. Religion, the only refuge of the unfortunate, has been my balm in every woe. Oh! could I make her appear to you as she has done to me! Instead of ridiculing her tenets, you would fall down and worship her very semblance wherever you found it!

I will write again at more leisure, and notice other parts of yours. I send you a *simile* upon a character I don't know if you are acquainted with. I am confounded at your admiring my lines. I shall begin to question your taste—but Dr. G.! When I am low-spirited (which I am at times) I shall think of this as a *restorative*.

Now for the simile:—

The morning sun shines glorious and bright,
And fills the heart with wonder and delight!
He dazzles, in meridian splendor seen,
Without a blackening cloud to intervene.
So, at a distance view'd, your genius bright,
Your wit, your flowing numbers can delight,
But ah! when error's dark'ning clouds arise,
When passion thunders, folly's lightning flies,
More safe we gaze, but admiration dies:
And as the tempting brightness snares the moth,
Sure ruin marks too near approach to both.

Good night; for Clarinda's "heavenly eyes" need the earthly aid of sleep. Adieu. CLARINDA.

P.S.—I entreat you not to mention our correspondence to one on earth. Though I've conscious innocence, my situation is a delicate one.†

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*This was not strictly correct, but was doubtless stated with good independent intent.—G. G.

†The holograph of this letter is now in the possession of Mr. Robert Clarke of Cincinnati, who kindly lent it to us for reproduction.—G. G.

(5) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

January 1, 1788.

MANY happy returns of this day to you, my dear, pleasant friend! May each revolving year find you *wiser and happier!* I embrace the first spare hour to fulfill my promise; and begin with thanking you for the enclosed lines—they are very pretty:* I like the idea of personifying the vices rising in the absence of *Justice*. It is a constant source of refined pleasure, giving "to airy nothings a local habitation and a name," which people of a luxuriant imagination only can enjoy. Yet, to a mind of a benevolent turn, it is delightful to observe how equal the distribution of happiness is among all ranks! If stupid people are rendered incapable of tasting the refined pleasures of the intelligent and feeling mind, they are likewise exempted from the thousand distractions and disquietudes peculiar to sensibility.

I have been staying with a dear female friend who has long been an admirer of yours, and was once on the point of meeting with you in the house of a Mrs. Bruce. She would have been a much better "Clarinda." She is comely without being beautiful, and has a large share of sense, taste, and sensibility; added to all, a violent penchant for poetry. If ever I have an opportunity, I shall make you and her acquainted.† No wonder Dr. Gregory criticised my lines. I saw several defects in them myself; but had neither time nor patience (nor ability perhaps) to correct them. The three last verses were longer than the former; and in the conclusion, I saw a vile tautology which I could not get rid of. But you will wonder when I tell you that I am not only ignorant of every language except my own, but never so much as knew a syllable of the English grammar. If I can write grammatically, 'tis through mere habit. I rejoice to hear of Dr. Gregory being your particular friend. Though unacquainted, I am no stranger to his character: where worth unites with abilities, it commands our love as well as admiration. Alas! they are too seldom found in

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* On the death of Lord President Dundas.

† Clarinda's "dear female friend" was "Miss Mary Peacock," whom the reader will soon hear more of in these letters. She afterwards became the second wife of Mr. James Gray, of the High School, Edinburgh: the "Ettrick Shepherd" married a sister of Mr. Gray's first wife.

one character! Those possessed of great talents would do well to remember that all depends upon the use made of them. Shining abilities improperly applied, only serve to accelerate our destruction in both worlds. I loved you for your fine taste in poetry long before I saw you; so shall not trouble myself erasing the same word applied in the same way to me.

You say, "there is no corresponding with an agreeable woman without a mixture of the tender passion." I believe there is no friendship between people of sentiment of different sexes, without a little *softness;* but when kept within proper bounds, it only serves to give a higher relish to such intercourse. Love and Friendship are names in every one's mouth; but few, extremely few, understand their meaning. Love (or affection) cannot be genuine if it hesitate a moment to sacrifice every selfish gratification to the happiness of its object. On the contrary, when I would purchase *that* at the expense of *this*, it deserves to be styled—not love, but a name too gross to mention. Therefore, I contend that an honest man may have a friendly prepossession for a woman, whose soul would abhor the idea of an intrigue with her. These are my sentiments on the subject: I hope they correspond with yours.

'Tis honest in you to wish me to see you "*just as you are.*" I believe I have a tolerably just idea of your character. No wonder; for had I been a man, I should have been you. I am not vain enough to think myself equal in abilities; but I am formed with a liveliness of fancy, and a strength of passion little inferior. Situation and circumstances have, however, had the effects on each of us which might be expected. Misfortune has wonderfully contributed to subdue the keenness of my passions, while success and adulation have served to nourish and inflame yours. Both of us are incapable of deceit, because we want coolness and command of our feelings. Art is what I never could attain to, even in situations where a little would have been prudent. Now and then I am favored with a salutary blast of "the north wind of prudence." The southern zephyrs of kindness too often send up their sultry fogs, and cloud the atmosphere of my understanding. I have thought that Nature threw me off in the same mould, just after you. We were born, I believe, in one year.* Madam Nature has some merit by her work that year. Don't you think so? I suppose the carline has had a flying visit of Venus and the

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* Both were born in the year 1759; Burns, on the 25th January, Mrs. M'Lehose in April.

Graces; and Minerva has been jealous of her attention, and sent Apollo with his harp to charm them away.

But why do you accuse Fate for my misfortunes? There is a noble independence of mind which I admire; but, when not checked by Religion, it is apt to degenerate into a criminal arraignment of Providence. No "malignant demon," as you suppose, was "permitted to dash my cup of life with sorrow:" it was the kindness of a wise and tender Father who foresaw that I needed chastisement ere I could be brought to Himself. Ah, my friend, Religion converts our heaviest misfortunes into blessings! I feel it to be so. These passions, naturally too violent for my peace, have been broken and moderated by adversity; and if even that has been unable to conquer my vivacity, what lengths might I not have gone, had I been permitted to glide along in the sunshine of prosperity? I should have forgot my future destination, and fixed my happiness on the fleeting shadows below! My hand was denied the bliss of giving, but Heaven accepts of the wish. My heart was formed for love, and I desire to devote it to Him who is the source of love! Yes, we shall surely meet in an "unknown state of being," where there will be full scope for every kind, heartfelt affection—love without alloy, and without end. Your paragraph upon this made the tears flow down my face! I will not tell you the reflections which it raised in my mind; but I wished that a heart susceptible of such a sentiment took more pains about its accomplishment. I fancy you will not wish me to write again; you'll think me too serious and grave. I know not how I have been led to be so; but I make no excuse, because I must be allowed to write to you as I feel, or not at all. You say you have "humanized pride into honor and integrity." 'Tis a good endeavor; and could you command your too impetuous passions, it would be a more glorious achievement than his who conquered the world, and wept because he had no more worlds to subdue. Forgive my freedom with you: I never trouble myself with the faults of those I don't esteem, and only notice those of friends, to themselves. I am pleased with friends when they tell me mine, and look upon it as a test of real friendship.

I have your Poems in loan just now, I've read them many times, and with new pleasure. Sometime I shall give you my opinion of them severally. Let me have a sight of some of your "Bagatelles," as you style them. If ever I write any more, you shall have them; and I'll thank you to correct their errors. I wrote lines on Bishop Geddes, by way of blank

verse; but they were what Pope describes, "Where ten low words do creep in one dull line." I believe you (being a genius) have inspired me; for I never wrote so well before. Pray, is Dr. Gregory pious? I have heard so. I wish I knew him. Adieu! You have quantity enough, whatever be the quality! Good night, Believe me your sincere friend.

CLARINDA.

[*Tuesday*]

(6) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Thursday, 3d Jan. 1788.

I GOT your lines:* they are "in *kind!*" I can't but laugh at my presumption in pretending to send my poor ones to *you!* but it was to amuse myself. At this season, when others are joyous, I am the reverse. I have no *near* relations; and while others are with theirs, I sit alone, musing upon several of mine with whom I used to be—now gone to the land of forgetfulness.

You have put me in a rhyming humor. The moment I read yours, I wrote the following lines:—

Talk not of Love! it gives me pain,
For Love has been my foe:
He bound me in an iron chain,
And plung'd me deep in woe!

But Friendship's pure and lasting joys
My heart was formed to prove;
The worthy object be of those,
But never talk of Love.

The "Hand of Friendship" I accept,
May Honor be our guard!
Virtue our intercourse direct,
Her smiles our dear reward.

(For added stanza, see letter Sylvander to Clarinda, page 37.)

But I wish to know (in sober prose) how your leg is? I would have inquired sooner had I known it would have been acceptable. Miss N. informs me now and then; but I have not seen her dear face for some time. Do you think you could venture this length in a coach without hurting yourself? I go

* Here, again, the lines of Burns have been lost.

out of town the beginning of the week for a few days. I wish you could come to-morrow or Saturday. I long for a conversation with you, and lameness of body won't hinder that. 'Tis really curious—so much *fun* passing between two persons who saw one another only *once!* Say if you think you dare venture; only let the coachman be "adorned with sobriety."

Adieu! Believe me (on my simple word) your real friend and well-wisher, A. M.

(6) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Thursday, Janv. 3d*, 1788.]

MY DEAR CLARINDA,—Your last verses have so delighted me, that I have copied them in among some of my own most valued pieces, which I keep sacred for my own use. Do let me have a few now and then.

Did you, Madam, know what I feel when you talk of your sorrows!

Good God! that one, who has so much worth in the sight of heaven, and is so amiable to her fellow-creatures, should be so unhappy! I can't venture out for cold. My limb is vastly better; but I have not any use of it without my crutches. Monday, for the first time, I dine in a neighbor's, next door. As soon as I can go so far, *even in a coach*, my first visit shall be to you. Write me when you leave town, and immediately when you return; and I earnestly pray your stay may be short. You can't imagine how miserable you made me when you hinted to me not to write. Farewell. SYLVANDER.

(7) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Thursday, Jan.* 3, 1788.]

YOU are right, my dear Clarinda; a friendly correspondence goes for nothing, except one write their undisguised sentiments. Yours please me for their intrinsic merit, as well as because they are *yours*, which, I assure you, is to me a high recommendation. Your religious sentiments, Madam, I revere. If you have, on some suspicious evidence from some lying oracle, learnt that I despise or ridicule so sacredly important a matter as real religion, you have, my Clarinda, much misconstrued your friend.—"I am not mad, most noble Festus!" Have you ever met a perfect character? Do we not sometimes rather exchange faults than get rid of them? For instance, I am perhaps tired with, and shocked at, a life too much the prey of giddy inconsistencies and thoughtless follies; by degrees I grow sober, prudent, and statedly pious —I say statedly, because the most unaffected devotion is not at all inconsistent with my first character—I join the world in congratulating myself on the happy change. But let me pry more narrowly into this affair. Have I, at bottom, any thing of a secret pride in these endowments and emendations? Have I nothing of a presbyterian sourness, a hypocritical severity, when I survey my less regular neighbors? In a word, have I missed all those nameless and numberless modifications of indistinct selfishness, which are so near our own eyes, that we can scarce bring them within the sphere of our vision, and which the known spotless cambric of our character hides from the ordinary observer?

My definition of worth is short; truth and humanity respecting our fellow-creatures; reverence and humility in the presence of that Being, my Creator and Preserver, and who, I have every reason to believe, will one day be my Judge. The first part of my definition is the creature of unbiassed instinct; the last is the child of after reflection. Where I found these two essentials I would gently note and slightly mention any attendant flaws—flaws, the marks, the consequences of human nature.

I can easily enter into the sublime pleasures that your strong imagination and keen sensibility must derive from religion, particularly if a little in the shade of misfortune; but I own I cannot, without a marked grudge, see heaven totally engross so amiable, so charming a woman, as my friend Clarinda; and should be very well pleased at *a circumstance* that would put it in the power of somebody (happy somebody!) to divide her attention, with all the delicacy and tenderness of an earthly attachment.

You will not easily persuade me that you have not a grammatical knowledge of the English language—so far from being inaccurate, you are elegant beyond any woman of my acquaintance, except one, whom I wish you knew.*

Your last verses to me have so delighted me, that I have got an excellent old Scots air that suits the measure, and you shall see them in print in the "Scots Musical Museum," a work publishing by a friend of mine in this town. I want four stanzas; you gave me but three, and one of them alluded to an expression in my former letter; so I have taken your two first verses, with a slight alteration in the second, and have added a third; but you must help me to a fourth. Here they are: the latter half of the first

* This lady must have been Miss Chalmers.

stanza would have been worthy of Sappho; I am in raptures with it.

"Talk not of Love, it gives me pain,
For Love has been my foe:
He bound me with an iron chain,
And sunk me deep in woe.

But Friendship's pure and lasting joys
My heart was form'd to prove:
There, welcome, win and wear the prize,
But never talk of Love.

Your friendship much can make me blest,
O, why that bliss destroy!
Why urge the only* one request
You know I must† deny?"

The alteration in the second stanza is no improvement, but there was a slight inaccuracy in your rhyme. The third I only offer to your choice, and have left two words for your determination. The air is *The Banks of Spey*, and is most beautiful.

To-morrow evening I intend taking a chair, and paying a visit at Park Place, to a much-valued old friend.‡ If I could be sure of finding you at home (and I will send one of the chairmen to call), I would spend from five to six o'clock with you, as I go past. I cannot do more at this time, as I have something on my hand that hurries me much. I propose giving you the first call, my old friend the second, and Miss Nimmo as I return home. Do not break any engagement for me, as I will spend another evening with you, at any rate, before I leave town.

Do not tell me that you are pleased when your friends inform you of your faults. I am ignorant what they are; but I am sure they must be such evanes-

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* Or "*odious* one request."
† Or, "*will* deny."—*R. B.*
‡ Probably Mr. Nicol.

cent trifles, compared with your personal and mental accomplishments, that I would despise the ungenerous, narrow soul, who would notice any shadow of imperfections you may seem to have, any other way than in the most delicate agreeable raillery. Coarse minds are not aware how much they injure the keenly feeling tie of bosom-friendship, when, in their foolish officiousness, they mention what nobody cares for recollecting. People of nice sensibility and generous minds have a certain intrinsic dignity that fires at being trifled with, or lowered, or even too nearly approached.

You need make no apology for long letters: I am even with you. Many happy New Years to you, charming Clarinda! I can't dissemble, were it to shun perdition. He who sees you as I have done, and does not love you, deserves to be damn'd for his stupidity! He who loves you, and would injure you, deserves to be doubly damn'd for his villainy! Adieu.

SYLVANDER.

P.S.—What would you think of this for a fourth stanza?

Your thought, if love must harbor there,
Conceal it in that thought,
Nor cause me from my bosom tear
The very friend I sought.

(8) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*5th Jan.* 1788.]

SOME days, some nights, nay, some *hours*, like the "ten righteous persons in Sodom," save the rest of the vapid, tiresome, miserable months, and years of life. One of these hours, my dear Clarinda, blest me with yesternight.

"—One well-spent hour,
In such a tender circumstance for friends,
Is better than an age of common time."—*Thomson.*

My favorite feature in Milton's Satan is his manly fortitude in supporting what cannot be remedied; in short, the wild broken fragments of a noble, exalted mind in ruins. I meant no more by saying he was a favorite hero of mine.

I mentioned to you my letter to Dr. Moore, giving an account of my life: it is truth, every word of it, and will give you the just idea of a man whom you have honored with your friendship. I am afraid you will hardly be able to make sense of so torn a piece. Your verses I shall muse on deliciously, as I gaze on your image in my mind's eye, in my heart's core: they will be in time enough for a week to come. I am truly happy your headache is better. Oh, how can Pain or Evil be so daringly, unfeelingly, cruelly savage as to wound so noble a mind, so lovely a form!

My little fellow is all my namesake.* Write me soon. My every, strongest good wish attend you, Clarinda, SYLVANDER.

Saturday, Noon.

I know not what I have written. I am pestered with people around me.

(7) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Monday Night, Jany. 7th*, 1788.]

I CANNOT delay thanking you for the packet of Saturday;† twice have I read it with close attention. Some parts of it did beguile me of my tears. With Desdemona, I felt "'twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful." When I reached the paragraph where Lord Glencairn is mentioned, I burst out into tears. 'Twas that delightful swell of the heart which arises from a combination of the most pleasurable feelings. Nothing is so binding to a generous mind as placing confidence in it. I

* Robert Burns, junior, born 3d September 1786.

† This packet was evidently from Clarinda's remarks on this letter, a copy of Burns's autobiography, sent to Dr. Moore.

have ever felt it so. You seem to have known this feature in my character intuitively; and therefore entrusted me with all your faults and follies. The description of your first love-scene delighted me. It recalled the idea of some tender circumstances which happened to myself, at the same period of life—only mine did not go so far. Perhaps in return, I'll tell you the particulars when we meet. Ah, my friend! our early love emotions are surely the most exquisite. In riper years we may acquire more knowledge, sentiment, &c.; but none of these can yield such rapture as the dear delusions of heart-throbbing youth! Like yours, mine was a rural scene too, which adds much to the tender meeting. But no more of these recollections.

One thing alone hurt me, though I regretted many; your avowal of being an enemy to Calvinism. I guessed it was so by some of your pieces; but the confirmation of it gave me a shock I could only have felt for one I was interested in. You will not wonder at this, when I inform you that I am a strict Calvinist, *one* or *two* dark tenets excepted, which I never meddle with. Like many others, you are so, either from never having examined it with candor and impartiality, or from having unfortunately met with weak professors who did not understand it; and hypocritical ones who made it a cloak for their knavery. Both of these, I am aware, abound in country life: nor am I surprised at their having had this effect upon your more enlightened understanding. I fear your friend, the captain of the ship, was of no advantage to you in this and many other respects.

My dear Sylvander, I flatter myself you have some opinion of Clarinda's understanding. Her belief in Calvinism is not (as you will be apt to suppose) the prejudice of education. I was bred by my father in the Arminian principles. My mother, who was an angel, died when I was in my tenth year. She was a Calvinist—was adored in her life, and died triumphing in the prospect of immortality. I was too young at that period to know the difference; but her pious precepts and example often recurred to my mind amidst the giddiness and adulation of "Miss in her teens." 'Twas since I came to this town, five years ago, that I imbibed my present principles. They were those of a dear, valued friend, in whose judgment and integrity I had entire confidence. I listened often to him with delight, upon the subject. My mind was docile and open to conviction. I resolved to investigate with deep attention that scheme of doctrine which had such happy effects upon him. Conviction of understanding, and peace of

mind were the happy consequences. Thus have I given you a true account of my faith. I trust my practice will ever correspond. Were I to narrate my past life as honestly as you have done, you would soon be convinced that neither of us could hope to be justified by our good works.

If you have time and inclination I should wish to hear your chief objections to Calvinism. They have been often confuted by men of great minds and exemplary lives; but perhaps you never enquired into these. Ah Sylvander! Heaven has not endowed you with such uncommon powers of mind to employ them in the manner you have done. This long, serious subject will, I know, have one of *three* effects: either to make you laugh in derision—yawn in supine indifference—or set about examining the hitherto-despised subject. Judge of the interest Clarinda takes in you when she affirms that there are but few events could take place that would afford her the heartfelt pleasure of the latter.

Read this letter attentively, and answer me at leisure. Do not be frightened at its gravity; believe me, I can be as lively as you please. Though I wish Madame Minerva for my guide, I shall not be hindered from rambling sometimes in the fields of Fancy. I must tell you that I admire your narrative, in point of composition, beyond all your other productions. One thing I am afraid of; there is not a trace of friendship towards a female; now, in the case of Clarinda, this is the only "consummation devoutly to be wished."

You told me you never had met with a woman who could love as ardently as yourself. I believe it; and would advise you never to tie yourself till you meet with such a one. Alas! you'll find many who *canna*, and some who *manna;* but to be joined to one of the former description would make you miserable. I think you had almost best resolve against wedlock; for unless a woman were qualified for the companion, the friend, and the mistress, she would not do for you. The last may gain Sylvander, but the others alone can keep him. Sleep, and want of room, prevent my explaining myself upon "infidelity in a husband," which made you stare at me.* This and other things shall be matter for another letter, if you are not wishing this to be the last. If agreeable to you, I'll keep the narrative till we meet. Adieu! "Charming Clarinda" must e'en resign herself to the arms of Morpheus.—Your true friend,

CLARINDA.

* Probably one of the subjects of conversation during their short interview on the evening of Friday, 4th January.

P.S.—Don't detain the porter. Write when convenient.

I am probably to be in your Square this afternoon, near two o'clock. If your room be to the street, I shall have the pleasure of giving you a nod. I have paid the porter, and you may do so when you write. I am sure they sometimes have made us pay double. Adieu!

Tuesday Morning.

(9) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Jany. 8, 1788.

I AM delighted, charming Clarinda, with your honest enthusiasm for religion. Those of either sex, but particularly the female, who are lukewarm in that most important of all things—"O my soul, come not thou into their secrets!"

I feel myself deeply interested in your good opinion, and will lay before you the outline of my belief:—He who is our Author and Preserver, and will one day be our Judge, must be—not for His sake, in the way of duty, but from the natural impulse of our hearts—the object of our reverential awe and grateful adoration. He is almighty, and all-bounteous; we are weak and dependent: hence prayer and every other sort of devotion. "He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to everlasting life:" consequently, it must be in every one's power to embrace His offer of "everlasting life;" otherwise he could not, in justice, condemn those who did not. A mind pervaded, actuated, and governed by purity, truth, and charity, though it does not *merit* heaven, yet is an absolutely necessary prerequisite, without which heaven can neither be obtained nor enjoyed; and, by divine promise, such a mind shall never fail of attaining "everlasting life:" hence, the impure, the deceiving, and the uncharitable, exclude them-

selves from eternal bliss, by their unfitness for enjoying it. The Supreme Being has put the immediate administration of all this, for wise and good ends known to Himself, into the hands of Jesus Christ, a great personage, whose relation to Him we cannot comprehend, but whose relation to us is that of a Guide and Saviour; and who, except for our own obstinacy and misconduct, will bring us all, through various ways, and by various means, to bliss at last.

These are my tenets, my lovely friend; and which, I think, cannot be well disputed. My creed is pretty nearly expressed in the last clause of Jamie Dean's grace, an honest weaver in Ayrshire; "Lord, grant that we may lead a gude life! for a gude life maks a gude end, at least it helps weel!"

I am flattered by the entertainment you tell me you have found in my packet. You see me as I have been, you know me as I am, and may guess at what I am likely to be. I too may say, "Talk not of love, &c.," for indeed he has "plunged me deep in woe!" Not that I ever saw a woman who pleased unexceptionably, as my Clarinda elegantly says, "in the companion, the friend, and the mistress." *One* indeed I could except—*One*, before passion threw its mists over my discernment, I knew—*the* first of women! Her name is indelibly written in my heart's core*—but I dare not look in on it—a degree of agony would be the consequence. Oh! thou perfidious, cruel, mischief-making demon, who presidest o'er that frantic passion—thou mayest, thou dost poison my peace, but shalt not taint my honor! I would not, for a single moment, give an asylum to the most distant imagination that would shadow the faintest outline of a selfish gratification, at the expense of *her* whose happiness is twisted with the threads of my existence. May she

* Evidently in half-drunk mood he was thinking of Jean Armour.—G. G.

be happy as she deserves! And if my tenderest, faithfulest friendship can add to her bliss, I shall at least have one solid mine of enjoyment in my bosom! *Don't guess at these ravings!*

I watched at our front window to-day, but was disappointed. It has been a day of disappointments. I am just risen from a two hours' bout after supper, with silly or sordid souls, who could relish nothing in common with me—but the Port. *One!*——'tis now "witching time of night;" and whatever is out of joint in the foregoing scrawl, impute it to enchantments and spells; for I can't look over it, but will seal it up directly, as I don't care for to-morrow's criticisms on it.

You are by this time fast asleep, Clarinda; may good angels attend and guard you as constantly and faithfully as my good wishes do!

> "Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
> Shot forth peculiar graces."

John Milton, I wish thy soul better rest than I expect on my pillow to-night! O for a little of the cart-horse part of human nature! Good night, my dearest Clarinda! SYLVANDER.

Tuesday Night.

(8) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Wednesday 10 P.M. [*Jan. 9th*, 1788.]

THIS moment your letter was delivered to me. My boys are asleep. The youngest has been for sometime in a crazy state of health, but has been worse these two days past. Partly this, and the badness of the day, prevented my exchanging a heartfelt "How d'ye," yesterday. Friday, if nothing

prevents, I shall have that pleasure, about two o'clock, or a little before it."

I wonder how you could write so distinctly after two or three hours over a bottle; but they were not congenial whom you sat with, and therefore your spirits remained unexhausted; and when quit of them, you fled to a friend who can relish most things in common with you (except port). 'Tis dreadful what a variety of these "silly, sordid souls" one meets with in life! but in scenes of mere sociability these pass. In reading the account you gave of your inveterate turn for social pleasure, I smiled at its resemblance to my own. It is so great that I often think I had been a man but for some mistake of Nature. If you saw me in a merry party, you would suppose me only an enthusiast in *fun;* but I now avoid parties. My spirits are sunk for days after; and, what is worse, there are sometimes dull or malicious souls who censure me loudly for what their sluggish natures cannot comprehend. Were I possessed of an independent fortune, I would scorn their pitiful remarks; but everything in my situation renders prudence necessary.

I have slept little these two nights. My child was uneasy, and that kept me awake watching him. Sylvander, if I have merit in anything, 'tis in an unremitting attention to my two children; but it cannot be denominated merit, since 'tis as much inclination as duty. A prudent woman (as the world goes) told me she was surprised I loved them "considering what a father they had." I replied with acrimony, I could not but love my children in any case; but my having given them the misfortune of such a father endears them doubly to my heart; they are innocent; they depend upon me; and I feel this the most tender of all claims. While I live, my fondest attention shall be theirs.

All my life I loved the unfortunate, and ever will. Did you ever read Fielding's Amelia? If you have not, I beg you would. There are scenes in it, tender, domestic scenes, which I have read over and over, with feelings too delightful to describe! I meant a "Booth," as such a one is infinitely to be preferred to a brutal, though perhaps constant husband. I can conceive a man, fond of his wife, yet (Sylvander-like) hurried into a momentary deviation, while his heart remained faithful. If he concealed it, it could not hurt me; but if, unable to bear the anguish of self-reproach, he unbosomed it to me, I would not only forgive him, but comfort and speak kindly, and in secret only weep. Reconciliation in such a case would be exquisite beyond almost anything I can conceive! Do you now

understand me on this subject? I was uneasy till it was explained; for all I have said, I know not if I had been an "Amelia," even with a "Booth." My resentments are keen, like all my other feelings: I am exquisitely alive to kindness and to unkindness. The first binds me for ever! But I have none of the spaniel in my nature. The last would soon cure me, though I loved to distraction. But all this is not perhaps interesting to Sylvander. I have seen nobody to-day; and like a true egotist, talk away to please myself. I am not in a humor to answer your creed to-night.

I have been puzzling my brain about the fair one you bid me "not guess at." I first thought it your Jean; but I don't know if she now possesses your "tenderest, faithfulest friendship." I can't understand that bonie lassie: her refusal, after such proofs of love, proves her to be either an angel or a dolt. I beg pardon, I know not all the circumstances, and am no judge therefore. I love you for your continued fondness, even after enjoyment: few of your sex have souls in such cases. But I take this to be the test of true love—mere desire is all that the bulk of people are susceptible of; and that is soon satisfied. "*Your good wishes.*" You had mine, Sylvander, long before I saw you. You will have them while I live. With you, I wish I had a little of the "carthorse" in me. You and I have some horse properties; but more of the eagle, and too much of the turtle-dove! Good night!—Your friend, CLARINDA.

Thursday Morning, [*Jany.* 10, 1788.]

This day is so good that I'll make out my call to your Square. I am laughing to myself at announcing this for the third time. Were she "who poisons your peace" to intend you a Pisgah view, she could do no more than I have done on this trivial occasion. Keep a good heart, Sylvander; the eternity of your love-sufferings will be ended before six weeks. Such perjuries "the laughing gods allow." But remember there is no such toleration in friendship, and—I am yours, CLARINDA.

(10) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Jany.* 10, 1788.]

I AM certain I saw you, Clarinda; but you don't look to the proper story for a poet's lodging,

"Where speculation roosted near the sky."

I could almost have thrown myself over for very vexation. Why didn't you look higher? It has spoilt my peace for this day. To be near my charming Clarinda; to miss her look while she was searching for me. I am sure the soul is capable of disease; for mine has convulsed itself into an inflammatory fever. I am sorry for your little boy: do let me know tomorrow how he is.

You have converted me, Clarinda—I shall love that name while I live; there is heavenly music in it. Booth and Amelia I know well. Your sentiments on that subject, as they are on every subject, are just and noble. "To be feelingly alive to kindness, and to unkindness," is a charming female character.

What I said in my last letter, the powers of fuddling sociality only know for me. By yours, I understand my good star has been partly in my horizon, when I got wild in my reveries. Had that evil planet, which has almost all my life shed its baleful rays on my devoted head, been, as usual, in its zenith, I had certainly blabb'd something that would have pointed out to you the dear object of my tenderest friendship, and, in spite of me, something more. Had that fatal information escaped me (and it was merely chance, or kind stars, that it did not), I had been undone! You never would have written me, except perhaps *once* more! O, I could curse circumstances, and the coarse tie of human laws, which keeps fast what common

sense would loose, and which bars that happiness itself cannot give—happiness which, otherwise, Love and Honor would warrant! But hold, I shall make no more "hair-breadth 'scapes."

My friendship, Clarinda, is a life-rent business. My likings are both strong and eternal. I told you I had but one male friend: I have but two female. I should have a third, but she is surrounded by the blandishments of flattery and courtship. The name I register in my heart's core is *Peggy Chalmers:* Miss Nimmo can tell you how divine she is. She is worthy of a place in the same bosom with my Clarinda? That is the highest compliment I can pay her. Farewell, Clarinda! Remember SYLVANDER.

Thursday Noon.

(9) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Thursday Eve., [*Jan.* 10, 1788.]

I COULD not see you, Sylvander, though I had twice traversed the Square. I'm persuaded you saw not me neither. I met the young lady I meant to call for first; and returned to seek another acquaintance, but found her moved. All the time my eye soared to poetic heights, *alias* garrets, but not a glimpse of you could I obtain! You surely was within the glass, at least. I returned, finding my intrinsic dignity a good deal hurt, as I missed my friend. Perhaps I will see you again next week: say how high you are. Thanks for the enquiry about my child; his complaints are of a tedious kind, and require patience and resignation. Religion has taught me both. By nature I inherit as little of them as a harum-scarum friend of mine. In what respects has Clarinda "converted you?" Tell me. It were an arduous task indeed!

Your "ravings" last night, and your ambiguous remarks upon them, I can not, perhaps ought not to comprehend. I am your friend, Sylvander: take care lest Virtue demand even Friendship as a sacrifice. You need not curse the tie of human laws; since what is the happiness Clarinda would derive from being loosed? At present, she enjoys the hope of having her

children provided for. In the other case, she is left indeed at liberty, but half dependent on the bounty of a friend—kind in substantials, but having no feeling of romance: and who are the generous, the disinterested, who would risk the world's "dread laugh" to protect her and her little ones? Perhaps a Sylvander-like son of "whim and fancy" might, in a sudden fit of romance: but would not ruin be the consequence? Perhaps one of the former . . . yet if he was even dearer to her than all the world—such are still her romantic ideas—she could not be his.

You see, Sylvander, you have no cause to regret my bondage. The above is a true picture. Have I not reason to rejoice that I have it not in my power to dispose of myself? (I commit myself into Thy hands, Thou Supreme Disposer of all events! do Thou with me as seemeth to Thee good!) Who is this one male friend? I know your third female. Ah, Sylvander, many "that are first shall be last," and *vice versa!* I am proud of being compared to Miss Chalmers: I have heard how amiable she is. She cannot be more so than Miss Nimmo: why do you not register her also? She is warmly your friend; surely you are incapable of ingratitude. She has almost wept to me at mentioning your intimacy with a certain famous, or rather infamous, man in town.* Do you think Clarinda could anger you just now? I composed lines addressed to you some time ago, containing a hint upon the occasion. I had not courage to send them then: if you say you'll not be angry, I will yet.

I know not how 'tis, but I felt an irresistible impulse to write to you the moment I read yours. I have a design in it. Part of your interest in me is owing to mere novelty. You'll be tired of my correspondence ere you leave town, and will never fash to write me from the country. I forgive you in a "state of celibacy." Sylvander, I wish I saw you happily married: you are so formed, you cannot be happy without a tender attachment, Heaven direct you!

When you see Bishop Geddes,† ask him if he remembers a lady at Mrs. Kemp's, on a Sunday night, who listened, to every word he uttered, with the gaze of attention. I saw he observed me, and returned that glance of cordial warmth which assured me he was pleased with my delicate flattery. I wished that night he had been my father that I might shelter me in his bosom.

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* The reference here was probably to William Nicol.

† Geddes was the Roman Catholic prelate of Edinburgh, who won the special reverence of Burns.

You shall have this, as you desired, to-morrow; and if possible, none for four or five days. I say, if possible, for I really can't but write as if I had "nothing else to do." I admire your Epitaph; but while I read it, my heart swells at the sad idea of its realization. Did you ever read *Sancho's Letters?* they would hit your taste. My next will be on my favorite theme—religion.

Farewell, Sylvander! Be wise, be prudent, and be happy.

CLARINDA.

Let your next be sent in the morning.

If you were well, I would ask you to meet me to-morrow, at twelve o'clock. I go down in the Leith Fly, with poor Willie: what a pleasant chat we might have! But I fancy 'tis impossible. Adieu!

Friday. One o'clock.

([11]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Saturday Morning [*Jan. 12th*, 1788.]

YOUR thoughts on religion, Clarinda, shall be welcome. You may perhaps distrust me when I say 'tis also *my* favorite topic; but mine is the religion of the bosom. I hate the very idea of controversial divinity; as I firmly believe that every honest, upright man, of whatever sect, will be accepted of the Deity. If your verses, as you seem to hint, contain censure, except you want an occasion to break with me, don't send them. I have a little infirmity in my disposition, that where I fondly love or highly esteem, I cannot bear reproach.

"Reverence thyself" is a sacred maxim; and I wish to cherish it. I think I told you Lord Bolingbroke's saying to Swift—"Adieu, dear Swift! with all thy faults I love thee entirely: make an effort to love me with all mine." A glorious sentiment, and without which there can be no friendship! I do highly,

very highly, esteem you, Clarinda: you merit it all! Perhaps, too (I scorn dissimulation), I could fondly love you; judge then, what a maddening sting your reproach would be. "Oh, I have sins to heaven, but none to you." With what pleasure would I meet you to-day, but I cannot walk to meet the Fly. I hope to be able to see you, *on foot*, about the middle of next week. I am interrupted—perhaps you are not sorry for it. You will tell me; but I won't anticipate blame. O Clarinda! did you know how dear to me is your look of kindness, your smile of approbation, you would not, either in prose or verse, risk a censorious remark.

"Curst be the verse, how well so e'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe."

SYLVANDER.

[Probably a letter of Clarinda's lost here.]

([12]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Saturday, Jan.* 12.]

YOU talk of weeping, Clarinda! Some involuntary drops wet your lines as I read them. *Offend me*, my dearest angel! You cannot offend me—you never offended me. If you had ever given me the least shadow of offence, so pardon me, my God, as I forgive Clarinda. I have read yours again; it has blotted my paper. Though I find your letter has agitated me into a violent headache, I shall take a chair, and be with you about eight. A friend is to be with us to tea, on my account, which hinders me from coming sooner. Forgive, my dearest Clarinda, my unguarded expressions! For Heaven's sake, forgive me, or I shall never be able to bear my own mind.—Your unhappy, SYLVANDER.

[On Saturday night (12th January) Burns had his *second* tête-à-tête meeting with Clarinda, in her own house. The first of these interviews (on Friday 4th January) was of short duration, yet sufficiently long to afford time to Sylvander to give Clarinda a sketch of his bygone attachment to Jean Armour, with its results; and also for Clarinda to make Sylvander "stare at her remarks on infidelity in a husband." The letter of Clarinda which follows, and especially its supplement of *Tuesday*, gives the reader a peep "behind the scenes." At parting the poet wished her, in his own mother's phrase, "A sound sleep and a blythe waukening."]—*Douglas.*

([10]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES. 1843.)

Sunday Evening, [*Jan.* 13.]

I WILL not deny it, Sylvander, last night was one of the most exquisite I ever experienced. Few such fall to the lot of mortals! Few, extremely few, are formed to relish such refined enjoyment. That it should be so, vindicates the wisdom of Heaven. But though our enjoyment did not lead beyond the limits of virtue, yet to-day's reflections have not been altogether unmixed with regret. The idea of the pain it would have given, were it known to a friend to whom I am bound by the sacred ties of gratitude (no more);* the opinion Sylvander may have formed from my unreservedness; and, above all, some secret misgivings that Heaven may not approve, situated as I am—these procured me a sleepless night; and though at church, I am not at all well.

Sylvander, you saw Clarinda last night, behind the scenes! Now, you'll be convinced she has faults. If she knows herself, her intention is always good; but she is too often the victim of sensibility, and hence is seldom pleased with herself. A rencontre to-day I will relate to you, because it will show you I have my own share of pride. I met with a sister of Lord Napier at the house of a friend with whom I sat between sermons: I knew who she was; but paid her no other marks of respect than I do to any gentlewoman. She eyed me with minute, supercilious attention, never looking at me when I spoke, but even half interrupted me, before I had done

* Her cousin, Lord Craig; the expression (no more) means, evidently, nay, more.

addressing the lady of the house. I felt my face glow with resentment and consoled myself with the idea of being her superior in every respect but the accidental, trifling one of birth! I was disgusted at the fawning deference the lady showed her; and when she told me at the door that it was my Lord Napier's sister, I replied, "Is it indeed?—by her ill-breeding I should have taken her for the daughter of some upstart tradesman!"

Sylvander, my sentiments as to birth and fortune are truly unfashionable: I despise the persons who pique themselves on either—the former especially. Something may be allowed to bright talents, or even external beauty—these belong to us essentially; but birth in no respect can confer merit, because it is not our own. A person of vulgar, uncultivated mind I would not take to my bosom in any station; but one possessed of natural genius improved by education and diligence, such an one I'd take for my friend, be her extraction ever so mean. These alone constitute any real distinction between man and man. Are we not all the offspring of Adam? Have we not one God—one Saviour—one Immortality? I have found but one among all my acquaintance who agreed with me—my Mary whom I mentioned to you. I am to spend to-morrow with her, if I am better. I like her the more that she likes you.

I intended to resume a little upon your favorite topic, the "Religion of the bosom." Did you ever imagine that I meant any other? Poor were that religion and unprofitable whose seat is merely in the brain. In most points we seem to agree: only I found all my hopes of pardon and acceptance with Heaven upon the merit of Christ's atonement—whereas you do upon a good life. You think "it helps weel at least." If anything we could do had been able to atone for the violation of God's Law, where was the need (I speak it with reverence) of such an astonishing Sacrifice? Job was an "upright man." In the dark season of adversity, when other sins were brought to his remembrance, he boasted of his integrity; but no sooner did God reveal Himself to him, than he exclaimed, "Behold I am vile, and abhor myself in dust and ashes." Ah! my friend, 'tis pride that hinders us from embracing Jesus! we would be our own Saviour, and scorn to be indebted even to the "Son of the Most High." But this is the only sure foundation of our hopes. It is said by God Himself, it is "to some a stumbling-block, to others foolishness;" but they who believe feel it to be "the wisdom of God."

If my head did not ache, I would continue the subject. I too hate controversial religion; but this is the "Religion of the Bosom." My God! Sylvander, why am I so anxious to make you embrace the Gospel? I dare not probe too deep for an answer: let your heart answer; in a word Benevolence. When I return, I'll finish this. Meantime, adieu! Sylvander, I intended doing you good; if it prove the reverse I shall never forgive myself. Good night.

Tuesday noon [*Jan. 15th.*] Just returned from the Dean, where I dined and supped with fourteen of both sexes—all stupid. My Mary and I alone understood each other. However, we were joyous, and I sung in spite of my cold; but no wit. 'Twould have been pearls before swine literalized. I recollect promising to write you. Sylvander, you'll never find me worse than my word. If you have written me (which I hope), send it to me when convenient, either at nine in the morning or evening. I fear your limb may be worse from staying so late. I have other fears too: guess them! Oh! my friend, I wish ardently to maintain your esteem; rather than forfeit one iota of it, I'd be content never to be wiser than now. Our last interview has raised you very high in mine. I have met with few indeed of your sex who understood delicacy in such circumstances; yet 'tis that only which gives relish to such delightful intercourse. Do you wish to preserve my esteem, Sylvander? Do not be proud to Clarinda! She deserves it not. I subscribe to Lord B.'s sentiment to Swift; yet some faults I shall still sigh over, though you style it "reproach" even to hint them. Adieu! You have it much in your power to add to the happiness or unhappiness of

CLARINDA.

([13]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Monday Evening, 11 *o'clock*, [*Jan.* 14.]

WHY have I not heard from you, Clarinda? To-day I well expected it; and before supper when a letter to me was announced, my heart danced with rapture; but behold, 'twas some fool who had taken into his head to turn poet, and made me an offering of the

first fruits of his nonsense, "It is not poetry, but prose run mad."

Did I ever repeat to you an epigram I made on a Mr. Elphinston, who has given a translation of *Martial*, a famous Latin poet? The poetry of Elphinston can only equal his prose notes.* I was sitting in a merchant's shop of my acquaintance, waiting somebody; he put *Elphinston* into my hand, and asked my opinion of it: I begged leave to write it on a blank leaf, which I did, as you shall see on a new page:

To Mr. Elphinston.

O thou, whom poesy abhors!,
Whom prose has turnèd out of doors!
Heard'st thou yon groan? proceed no further!
'Twas laurel'd Martial calling murther!

I am determined to see you, if at all possible, on Saturday evening. Next week I must sing—

"The night is my departing night,
The morn's the day I maun awa:
There's neither friend nor foe o' mine
But wishes that I were awa!
What I hae done for lack o' wit,
I never, never can reca';
I hope ye're a' my friends as yet,
Gude night, and joy be wi' you a'!"

If I could see you sooner, I would be so much the happier; but I would not purchase the *dearest gratifi-*

* Mr. James Elphinston, born in Edinburgh in 1721, set up a boarding-school at Kensington, London, where Samuel Johnson sometimes visited him. He died at Hammersmith in 1809. He pleased Johnson mightily by suggesting and causing the publication in Edinburgh of an edition of *The Rambler* in 8 vols. duodecimo, with translation of the mottoes. It is the handsomest edition of that work ever printed.—*Douglas.*

His own writings are now forgotten, or remembered for their absurdity. Dr. Beattie says "His translation of *Martial* is truly an unique: the specimens issued by him for subscribers did very well to laugh at; but a whole quarto of nonsense and gibberish is too much. It is strange that a man, not wholly illiterate, should have lived so long in England, without learning the language." —*Biog. Dict.*

cation on earth, if it must be at your expense in worldly censure; far less, inward peace!

I shall certainly be ashamed of thus scrawling whole sheets of incoherence. The only *unity* (a sad word with poets and critics!) in my ideas, is Clarinda. There my heart "reigns and revels."

> "What art thou, Love? whence are those charms,
> That thus thou bear'st an universal rule?
> For thee the soldier quits his arms,
> The king turns slave, the wise man fool.
> In vain we chase thee from the field,
> And with cool thoughts resist thy yoke:
> Next tide of blood, alas! we yield;
> And all those high resolves are broke!"

I like to have quotations ready for every occasion. They give one's ideas so pat, and save one the trouble of finding expression adequate to one's feelings. I think it is one of the greatest pleasures attending a poetic genius, that we can give our woes, cares, joys, loves, &c., an embodied form in verse, which, to me, is ever immediate ease. Goldsmith says finely of his muse—

> "Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe:
> Who found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so."

My limb has been so well to-day, that I have gone up and down stairs often without my staff. To-morrow I hope to walk once again on my own legs to dinner. It is only next street. Adieu!

SYLVANDER.

(14) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Tuesday Evening [*Jan.* 15].

THAT you have faults, my Clarinda, I never doubted; but I knew not where they existed, and Saturday night made me more in the dark than ever. O Clarinda! why would you wound my soul by hinting that "last night must have lessened my opinion of you!" True, I was "behind the scenes with you;" but what did I see? A bosom glowing with honor and benevolence; a mind ennobled by genius, informed and refined by education and reflection, and exalted by native religion, genuine as in the climes of heaven; a heart formed for all the glorious meltings of friendship, love, and pity. These I saw. I saw the noblest immortal soul, creation ever showed me.

I looked long, my dear Clarinda, for your letter; and am vexed that you are complaining. I have not caught you so far wrong as in your idea, that the commerce you have with one friend hurts you, if you cannot tell every tittle of it to another. Why have so injurious a suspicion of a good God, Clarinda, as to think, that Friendship and Love, on the sacred inviolate principles of Truth, Honor, and Religion, can be anything else than an object of his divine approbation?

I have mentioned, in some of my former scrawls, Saturday evening next. Do allow me to wait on you that evening. Oh, my angel! how soon must we part! —and when can we meet again? I look forward on the horrid interval with tearful eyes! What have I not lost by not knowing you sooner? I fear, I fear my acquaintance with you is too short, to make that lasting impression on your heart I could wish.

SYLVANDER.

([11]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Wed. Morn. [16 *Jan.* 1788.]

YOUR mother's wish was fully realized. I slept sounder last night than for weeks past, and I had "a blythe waukening"; for your letter was the first object my eyes opened on. Sylvander, I fancy you and "Vulcan" are intimates: he had lent you a key which open's Clarinda's heart at pleasure—shews you what is there, and enables you to adapt yourself to its every feeling! I believe I shall give over writing you. Your letters are too much! my way is, alas! "hedged in;" but had I, like Sylvander, "the world before me," I should bid him, "if he had a friend that loved me," tell him to *write* as he does, and "that would woo me." Seriously, you are the first letter-writer I ever knew, and I only wonder how you can be *fashed* with my scrawls. I impute it to partiality.

Either *to-morrow*, or *Friday*, I shall be happy to see you. On *Saturday*, I am not *sure* of being alone, or at home. Say which you'll come? Come to tea if you please; but eight will be an hour less liable to intrusions. I hope you'll *come afoot*, even tho' you take a chair home. A chair is so uncommon a thing in our neighborhood, it is apt to raise speculation; but they are all asleep by ten. I'm happy to hear of your being able to "*walk*"—even to the next street. You are a consummate flatterer; really my cheeks glow while I read your flights of fancy. I fancy you see I like it, when you peep into the *Repository*. I know none insensible to that "delightful essence." If I grow *affected* or *conceited*, you are alone to blame. Ah! my friend, these are disgusting qualities! but I'm not afraid. I know any merit I have perfectly; but I know *many* sad *counterbalances*.

Your lines on Elphinston are *clever*, beyond anything I ever saw of the kind; I know the character—the figure is enough to make one cry *Murder!* He is a complete pedant in language; but are not you and I pedants in something else? Yes, but in far superior things—Love, Friendship, Poesy, Religion! Ah, Sylvander! you have murdered Humility, and I can say thou didst it.

You carry your warmth too far as to Miss Napier (not Nairn); yet I am pleased at it. She is sensible, lively, and well-

liked, they say. She was not to know Clarinda was "divine," and therefore kept her distance. She is comely, but a thick bad figure, waddles in her pace, and has rosy cheeks.

> Wha is that clumsy damsel there?
> Whisht! it's the daughter of a Peer,
> Right Honorably Great!"
>
> The daughter of a Peer, I cried,
> It doth not *yet* appear
> What we *shall* be (in t'other world),
> God keep us frae this here!
> That she has *Blude*, I'se no dispute,
> I see it in her face;
> Her honor's in her *name*, I fear,
> And in nae other place.

I hate myself for being satirical—hate me for it too. I'll certainly go to Miers to please you, either with Mary or Miss N. Sylvander, some most interesting parts of yours I cannot enter upon at present. I dare not think upon parting—upon *the interval;* but I'm sure both are wisely order'd for our good. A line in return to tell me which night you'll be with me—"*lasting impression!*" Your key might have shewn you me better. Say

> ———— "my lover, poet, and my friend,
> What day next month 'th' Eternity will end?"

When you use your key, don't rummage too much, lest you find I am half as great a fool in the *tender* as yourself. Farewell, Sylvander! I may sign, for I am already sealed, your friend. CLARINDA.

In reference to the lady's expressed anxiety that the poet's visits to her house be kept as secret as possible, Chambers makes the following grave observation:—["The lady doubtless meant well, but it is impossible to applaud either her prudence or her delicacy in encouraging visits which she felt would tell upon her reputation if they were discovered. It need not be insisted on that the pure are under an obligation to society to maintain all the appearances as well as the reality of purity."]

([15]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Saturday Morn. [19*th Jan.*]

THERE is no time, my Clarinda, when the conscious thrilling chords of Love and Friendship give such delight as in the pensive hours of what our favorite Thomson calls, "philosophic melancholy." The sportive insects, who bask in the sunshine of Prosperity, or the worms that luxuriantly crawl amid their ample wealth of earth; they need no Clarinda —they would despise Sylvander, if they dared. The family of Misfortune, a numerous group of brothers and sisters!—they need a resting-place to their souls. Unnoticed, often condemned by the world — in some degree, perhaps, condemned by themselves—they feel the full enjoyment of ardent love, delicate tender endearments, mutual esteem and mutual reliance.

In this light I have often admired religion. In proportion as we are wrung with grief, or distracted with anxiety, the ideas of a compassionate Deity, an Almighty Protector, are doubly dear.

> "'Tis this, my friend, that streaks our morning bright;
> 'Tis this that gilds the horrors of our night."

I have been this morning taking a peep through, as Young finely says, "the dark postern of time long elapsed;" and you will easily guess 'twas a rueful prospect: what a tissue of thoughtlessness, weakness, and folly! My life reminded me of a ruined temple: what strength, what proportion in some parts!—what unsightly gaps, what prostrate ruins in others! I kneeled down before the Father of mercies, and said, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!"

I rose eased and strengthened. I despise the superstition of a fanatic; but I love the religion of a man. "The future," said I to myself, "is still before me: there let me

> 'on reason build resolve
> That column of true majesty in man!'

I have difficulties many to encounter," said I; "but they are not absolutely insuperable:—and where is firmness of mind shown, but in exertion? Mere declamation is bombast rant. Besides, wherever I am, or in whatever situation I may be,

> "———'Tis nought to me,
> Since God is ever present, ever felt,
> In the void waste as in the city full;
> And where he vital breathes, there must be joy!"

Saturday Night—half after Ten.

What luxury of bliss I was enjoying this time yesternight! My ever-dearest Clarinda, you have stolen away my soul: but you have refined, you have exalted it: you have given it a stronger sense of virtue, and a stronger relish for piety.—Clarinda, first of your sex! if ever I am the veriest wretch on earth to forget you; if ever your lovely image is effaced from my soul,

> "May I be lost, no eye to weep my end;
> And find no earth that's base enough to bury me!"

What trifling silliness is the childish fondness of the every-day children of the world! 'Tis the unmeaning toying of the younglings of the fields and forests: but where Sentiment and fancy unite their sweets; where Taste and Delicacy refine; where Wit adds the flavor, and Good-sense gives strength and spirit to all; what a delicious draught is the hour of tender endearment! Beauty and Grace, in the arms of Truth and Honor, in all the luxury of mutual love!

Clarinda, have you ever seen the picture realized? Not in all its very richest coloring, but

> "Hope, thou nurse of young Desire,
> Fair promiser of Joy."

Last night, Clarinda, but for one slight shade, was the glorious picture—

> ————"Innocence
> Look'd gaily smiling on; while rosy Pleasure
> Hid young Desire amid her flowery wreath,
> And pour'd her cup luxuriant, mantling high
> The sparkling heav'nly vintage—Love and Bliss!"

Clarinda, when a poet and poetess of Nature's making—two of Nature's noblest productions—when they drink together of the same cup of Love and Bliss, attempt not, ye coarser stuff of human nature, profanely to measure enjoyment ye never can know! Good night, my dear Clarinda! SYLVANDER.

(12) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Saturday Even. [19*th Jan.*]

I AM wishing, Sylvander, for the power of looking into your heart. It would be but fair, for you have the key of mine. You are possessed of acute discernment. I am not deficient either in that respect. Last night must have shown you Clarinda not "divine," but as she really is. I can't recollect some things I said, without a degree of pain. Nature has been kind to me in several respects; but one essential she has denied me entirely: it is that instantaneous perception of fit and unfit, which is so useful in the conduct of life. No one can discriminate more accurately *afterwards* than Clarinda. But when her heart is so expanded by the influence of kindness, she loses all command of it, and often suffers severely in the recollection of her unguardedness. You must have perceived this; but at any rate, I wish you "to know me as

I really am." I would have given much for society to-day; for I can't bear my own: but no human being has come near me. Well as I like you, Sylvander, I would rather lose your love than your esteem: the first I ought not to wish; the other I shall ever endeavor to maintain. But no more of this: you prohibit it, and I obey.

For many years have I sought for a male friend, endowed with sentiments like yours; one who could love me with tenderness, yet unmixed with selfishness; who could be my friend, companion, protector, and who would die sooner than injure me. I sought—but I sought in vain! Heaven has, I hope, sent me this blessing in my Sylvander! Whatever weaknesses may cleave to Clarinda, her heart is not to blame: whatever it may have been by nature, it is unsullied by art. If she dare dispose of it—last night can leave you at no loss to guess the man:

Then, dear Sylvander, use it weel,
And row it in your bosom's biel;
Ye'll find it ay baith kind and leal,
And fu' o' glee;
It wad na wrang the vera deil;
Ah, far less thee!

How do you like this parody on a passage of my favorite poet? It is extempore—from the heart; and let it be *to* the heart. I am to enclose the first fruits of my muse:—

TO A BLACKBIRD SINGING ON A TREE.

MORNINGSIDE, 1784.

Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair;
Thy tuneful warblings, void of art,
Thrill sweetly thro' my aching heart.
Now choose thy mate and fondly love,
And all the charming transport prove—
Those sweet emotions all enjoy,
Let Love and Song thy hours employ;
Whilst I, a love-lorn exile, live,
And rapture nor receive nor give.
Go on, sweet bird, and soothe my care,
Thy cheerful notes will hush despair.

It has no poetic merit, but it bespeaks a sweet feminine mind—such a one as I wish mine to be; but my vivacity deprives me of that softness which is, in my opinion, the first female ornament. It was written to soothe an aching heart. I then labored under a cruel anguish of soul, which I cannot

tell you of. If I ever take a walk to the temple of Hymen, I'll disclose it; but you and I (were it ever possible) would "fall out by the way."

The lines on the soldier* were occasioned by reading a book entitled the "Sorrows of the Heart." Miss Nimmo was pleased with them, and sent them to the gentleman. They are not poetry, but they speak what I felt at a survey of so much filial tenderness.

I agree with you in liking quotations. If they are apt, they often give one's ideas more pleasantly than our own language can at all times. I am stupid to-night. I have a soreness at my heart. I conclude, therefore, with a verse of Goldsmith, which of late has become an immense favorite of mine;

> "In Nature's simplest habit clad,
> No wealth nor power had he;
> Genius and worth were all he had,
> But these were *all* to me."

Good night, "my dear Sylvander," say this (like Werter) to yourself,—Your CLARINDA.

Sunday Evening.

I would have given much, Sylvander, that you had heard Mr. Kemp this afternoon. You would have heard my principles, and the foundation of all my immortal hopes, elegantly delivered. "Let me live the life of the righteous, and my latter end be like his," was the text. Who are the righteous? "Those," says Sylvander, "whose minds are actuated and governed by purity, truth, and charity." But where does such a mind exist? "It must be where the soul is made perfect," for I know none such on earth. "The righteous," then, must mean those who believe in Christ, and rely on His perfect righteousness for their salvation. "Everlasting" life, as you observe, is in the power of all to embrace, and this is eternal life, to "believe in Him whom God hath sent." Purity, truth, and charity will flow from this belief, as naturally as the stream from the fountain. These are indeed the only evidences we can have of the reality of our faith; and they must be produced in a degree ere we can be fit for the enjoyment of Heaven. But where is the man who dare plead these before "Infinite Holiness?" Will inflexible Justice pardon our thousand violations of His laws? Will our imperfect repentance and amendments atone for past guilt? or, will we presume to present our best services (spot-

* This piece has not been preserved.

ted as they are) as worthy of acceptance before unerring Rectitude? I am astonished how any intelligent mind, blessed with a divine revelation, can pause a moment on the subject. "Enter not into judgment with me, O Lord! in Thy sight no flesh can be justified!" This must be the result of every candid mind upon surveying its own deserts. If God had not been pleased to reveal His own Son, as our all-sufficient Saviour, what could we have done but cried for mercy, without any sure hope of obtaining it? But when we have Him clearly announced as our surety, our guide, our blessed advocate with the Father—who, in their senses, ought to hesitate in putting their souls into the hands of this glorious "Prince of Peace?" Without this, we may admire the Creator in His works, but we can never approach Him with the confidential tenderness of children—"I will arise, and go to my Father." This is the blessed language of every one who believes and trusts in Jesus. Oh, Sylvander, who would go on fighting with themselves, resolving and re-resolving, while they can thus fly to their Father's house? But alas! it is not till we tire of these husks of our own, that we recollect that *there*, there is bread enough, and to spare. Whenever the wish is sincerely formed in our hearts, our Heavenly Father will have compassion upon us "though a great way off." This is the "religion of the bosom." I BELIEVE that there will be many of every sect, nation and people who will "stand before the throne;" but I believe that it will be the effect of Christ's atonement, conveyed to them by ways too complicated for our finite minds to comprehend. But why should we who know "the way, the truth, and the life" deprive ourselves of the comfort it is fitted to yield? Let my earnest wish for your eternal as well as temporal happiness, excuse the warmth with which I have unfolded what has been my own fixed point of rest. I want no controversy—I hate it; let our only strivings be, who shall be the most constant and attached friend, which of us shall render our conduct most approved to the other. I am well aware how vain it were (vain in every sense of the expression) to hope to sway a mind so intelligent as yours, by any arguments I could devise. May that God, who spoke worlds into existence, open your eyes to see "the truth, as it is in Jesus!" Forgive me, Sylvander, if I've been tedious upon my favorite theme. You know who it was, who could not stop "when his divinity came across him." * Even there you see we are congenial.

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* "But when Divinity comes cross me,
My readers ay are sure to lose me."
Dedication to G. H.

I'll tell you a pretty apt quotation I made to-day, warm from my heart. I met the Judges in the morning, as I went into the Parliament Square, among whom was Lord Dreghorn, in his new robes of purple. He is my mother's cousin-german, the greatest real honor he could ever claim; but used me in a manner unfeeling, harsh beyond description, at one of the darkest periods of my chequered life. I looked steadfastly in his sour face; his eye met mine. I was a female, and therefore he stared; but, when he knew who it was, he averted his eyes suddenly. Instantaneously these lines darted into my mind:

> "Would you the purple should your limbs adorn,
> Go, wash the conscious blemish with a tear."

The man, who enjoys more pleasure in the mercenary embrace of a courtezan, than in relieving the unfortunate, is a detestable character, whatever his bright talents may be.

I pity him! Sylvander, all his fortune could not purchase half the luxury of Friday night! Let us be grateful to Heaven, though it has denied us wealth and power, for being endowed with feelings, fitted to yield the most exquisite enjoyments here and hereafter! May I hope you'll read what I have urged on religion, with attention, Sylvander, when Reason resumes her reign? I've none of those future delusive hopes which you too vainly express as having towards Clarinda. Do not indulge them; my wishes extend to your immortal welfare. Let your first care be to please God: for that which he delights in must be happiness. I must conclude, or I'll relapse. I have not a grain of humor to-night in my composition; so, lest "charming Clarinda" should make you yawn, she'll decently say "good night!"

I laugh to myself at the recollection of your earnest asseverations as to your being anti-Platonic! Want of passions is not merit: strong ones under the control of reason and religion—let these be our glory.—Once more good night.

CLARINDA.

([16]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Sunday Night [*Jan. 20th*].

THE impertinence of fools has joined with a return of an old indisposition, to make me good for nothing

to-day. The paper has lain before me all this evening to write to my dear Clarinda, but—

"Fools rush'd on fools, as waves succeed to waves."

I cursed them in my soul; they sacrilegiously disturbed my meditations on her who holds my heart. What a creature is man! A little alarm last night and to-day, that I am mortal, has made such a revolution in my spirits! There is no philosophy, no divinity, comes half so home to the mind. I have no idea of courage that braves Heaven. 'Tis the wild ravings of an imaginary hero in bedlam. I can no more, Clarinda; I can scarcely hold up my head; but I am happy you don't know it, you would be so uneasy. SYLVANDER.

Monday Morning.

I am, my lovely friend, much better this morning on the whole; but I have a horrid languor on my spirits.

"Sick of the world and all its joy,
My soul in pining sadness mourns;
Dark scenes of woe my mind employ,
The past and present in their turns."

Have you ever met with a saying of the great and likewise good Mr. Locke, author of the famous Essay on the Human Understanding? He wrote a letter to a friend, directing it "Not to be delivered till after my decease." It ended thus,—"I know you loved me when living, and will preserve my memory now I am dead. All the use to be made of it is, that this life affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of having done well, and the hopes of another life. Adieu! I leave my best wishes with you.—J. LOCKE."

Clarinda, may I reckon on your friendship for life? I think I may. Thou Almighty Preserver of men! Thy friendship, which hitherto I have too much

neglected—to secure it shall, all the future days and nights of my life, be my steady care. The idea of my Clarinda follows:

> "Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
> Where, mix'd with God's, her loved idea lies."

But I fear inconstancy, the consequent imperfection of human weakness. Shall I meet with a friendship that defies years of absence and the chances and changes of fortune! Perhaps "such things are." *One* honest man I have great hopes from that way; but who, except a romance writer, would think on a *love* that could promise for life, in spite of distance, absence, chance, and change, and that, too, with slender hopes of fruition?

For my own part, I can say to myself in both requisitions—"Thou art the man." I dare, in cool resolve, I dare declare myself that friend and that lover. If womankind is capable of such things, Clarinda is. I trust that she is; and feel I shall be miserable if she is not. There is not one virtue which gives worth, or one sentiment which does honor to the sex, that she does not possess superior to any woman I ever saw: her exalted mind, aided a little, perhaps, by her situation, is, I think, capable of that nobly romantic love-enthusiasm. May I see you on Wednesday evening, my dear angel? The next Wednesday again, will, I conjecture, be a hated day to us both. I tremble for censorious remarks, for your sake; but in extraordinary cases, may not usual and useful precaution be a little dispensed with! Three evenings, three swift-winged evenings, with pinions of down, are all the past; I dare not calculate the future. I shall call at Miss Nimmo's to-morrow evening: 'twill be a farewell call.

I have wrote out my last sheet of paper, so I am reduced to my last half-sheet. What a strange, mys-

terious, faculty, is that thing called imagination! We have no ideas almost at all of another world; but I have often amused myself with visionary schemes of what happiness might be enjoyed by small alterations—alterations that we can fully enter to; in this present state of existence. For instance, suppose you and I just as we are at present; the same reasoning powers, sentiments, and even desires; the same fond curiosity for knowledge, and remarking observation in our minds; and imagine our bodies free from pain, and the necessary supplies for the wants of nature, at all times, and easily within our reach: imagine farther, that we were set free from the laws of gravitation which bind us to this globe, and could at pleasure fly, without inconvenience, through all the yet unconjectured bounds of creation, what a life of bliss would we lead, in our mutual pursuit of virtue and knowledge, and our mutual enjoyment of friendship and love!

I see you laughing at my fairy fancies, and calling me a voluptuous Mahometan; but I am certain I would be a happy creature, beyond any thing we call bliss here below; nay, it would be a paradise congenial to you too. Don't you see us, hand in hand, or rather, my arm about your lovely waist, making our remarks on Sirius, the nearest of the fixed stars, or surveying a comet, flaming innoxious by us, as we just now would mark the passing pomp of a travelling monarch; or in a shady bower of Mercury or Venus, dedicating the hour to love, in mutual converse, relying honor, and revelling endearment, whilst the most exalted strains of poesy and harmony would be the ready, spontaneous language of our souls! Devotion is the favorite employment of your heart; so it is of mine: what incentives then to, and powers for reverence, gratitude, faith and hope, in all the fervors of adoration and praise to that Being, whose unsearch-

able wisdom, power, and goodness, so pervaded, so inspired every sense and feeling! By this time, I dare say, you will be blessing the neglect of the maid that leaves me destitute of paper!

SYLVANDER.

(17) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Monday 21st Jany.*]

. . . I AM a discontented ghost, a perturbed spirit. Clarinda, if ever you forget Sylvander, may you be happy, but he will be miserable.

O what a fool I am in love! what an extraordinary prodigal of affection! Why are your sex called the tender sex, when I never have met with one who can repay me in passion? They are either not so rich in love as I am, or they are niggards where I am lavish.

O Thou, whose I am, and whose are all my ways! Thou seest me here, the hapless wreck of tides and tempests in my own bosom: do Thou direct to Thyself that ardent love for which I have so often sought a return, in vain, from my fellow-creatures! If Thy goodness has yet such a gift in store for me, as an equal return of affection from her who, Thou knowest, is dearer to me than life, do Thou bless and hallow our bond of love and friendship; watch over us, in all our outgoings and incomings, for good; and may the tie that unites our hearts be strong and indissoluble as the thread of man's immortal life!

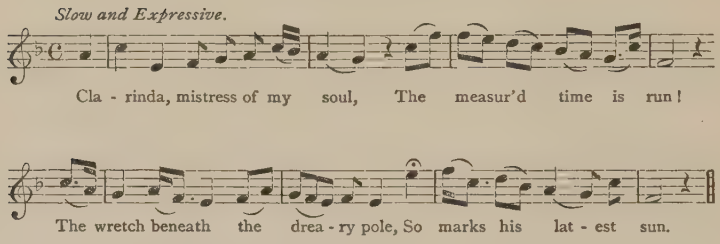
I am just going to take your Blackbird, the sweetest, I am sure, that ever sung, and prune its wings a little.

SYLVANDER.

[Burns had formed a resolution to leave Edinburgh permanently on Wednesday 30th January. He had written to Creech, his publisher, with a view to bring him to a final settlement. In the foregoing letter to Clarinda he requests a *fourth* private meeting with her on the evening of the 23rd, and along with it he probably sent his *Parting Song* to that lady, which is mentioned in his next letter as being in the hands of Mr. Schetki to set to music.

FAREWELL TO CLARINDA,

ON LEAVING EDINBURGH.


Slow and Expressive.
Cla - rinda, mistress of my soul, The measur'd time is run!
The wretch beneath the drea - ry pole, So marks his lat - est sun.

"Clarinda, mistress of my soul,
The measured time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary pole,
So marks his latest sun."

To what dark cave of frozen night
Shall poor Sylvander hie?
Deprived of thee, his life and light,
The sun of all his joy?

We part—but, by these precious drops
That fill thy lovely eyes,
No other light shall guide my steps
Till thy bright beams arise.

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
Has blest my glorious day;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
My worship to its ray?

Referring to the meeting on Wednesday 23rd January, Chambers thus observes:—"On this occasion, it would appear, the

communications of the pair had been of a more fervent and unreserved kind than heretofore, insomuch as to leave self-accusing reflections in the bosom of Clarinda. Each wrote a letter to the other the next day."]

([18]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Thursday Morning [*Jan. 24th.*]

"Unlavish Wisdom never works in vain."

I HAVE been tasking my reason, Clarinda, why a woman, who, for native genius, poignant wit, strength of mind, generous sincerity of soul, and the sweetest female tenderness, is without a peer; and whose personal charms have few, very few parallels among her sex; why, or how, she should fall to the blessed lot of a poor harum-scarum poet, whom Fortune had kept for her particular use to wreak her temper on, whenever she was in ill-humor.

One time I conjectured that, as Fortune is the most capricious jade ever known, she may have taken, not a fit of remorse, but a paroxysm of whim, to raise the poor devil out of the mire where he had so often and so conveniently served her as a stepping-stone, and given him the most glorious boon she ever had in her gift, merely for the maggot's sake, to see how his fool head and his fool heart will bear it.

At other times, I was vain enough to think that Nature, who has a great deal to say with Fortune, had given the coquettish goddess some such hint as—"Here is a paragon of female excellence, whose equal, in all my former compositions, I never was lucky enough to hit on, and despair of ever doing so again: you have cast her rather in the shades of life. There is a certain poet of my making: among your frolics,

it would not be amiss to attach him to this master piece of my hand, to give her that immortality among mankind, which no woman of any age ever more deserved, and which few rhymsters of this age are better able to confer."

Evening, Nine o'clock.

I am here—absolutely unfit to finish my letter—pretty hearty, after a bowl which has been constantly plied since dinner till this moment. I have been with Mr. Schetki the musician, and he has set the song finely. I have no distinct ideas of anything, but that I have drunk your health twice to-night, and that you are all my soul holds dear in this world.

SYLVANDER.

(13) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Thursday Forenoon [Jan^y. 24th.]

SYLVANDER, the moment I waked this morning, I received a summons from Conscience to appear at the Bar of Reason. While I trembled before this sacred throne, I beheld a succession of figures pass before me in awful brightness! Religion, clad in a robe of light, stalked majestically along, her hair dishevelled, and in her hand the Scriptures of Truth, held open at these words—"If you love Me, keep My commandments." Reputation followed: her eyes darted indignation, while she waved a beautiful wreath of laurel, intermixed with flowers gathered by Modesty in the Bower of Peace. Consideration held her bright mirror close to my eyes, and made me start at my own image! Love alone appeared as counsel in my behalf. She was adorned with a veil, borrowed from Friendship, which hid her defects, and set off her beauties to advantage. She had no plea to offer, but that of being the sister of Friendship, and the offspring of Charity. But Reason refused to listen to her defence, because she brought no certificate from the Temple of Hymen. While I trembled before her, Reason addressed me in the following manner:—"Return to my paths, which alone are peace; shut your heart against the fascinating intru-

sion of the passions; take Consideration for your guide, and you will soon arrive at the Bower of Tranquillity."

Sylvander, to drop my metaphor, I am neither well nor happy to-day: my heart reproaches me for last night. If you wish Clarinda to regain her peace, determine against everything but what the strictest delicacy warrants.

I do not blame you, but myself. I must not see you on Saturday, unless I find I can depend on myself acting otherwise. Delicacy, you know, it was which won me to you at once: take care you do not loosen the dearest, most sacred tie that unites us! Remember Clarinda's present and eternal happiness depends upon her adherence to virtue. Happy Sylvander! that can be attached to Heaven and Clarinda together. Alas! I feel I cannot serve two masters. God pity me!!

Thursday night.

Why have I not heard from you, Sylvander? Everything in nature seems tinged with gloom to-day. Ah Sylvander,

> "The heart's ay the part ay
> That makes us right or wrang!"

How forcibly have these lines recurred to my thoughts! Did I not tell you what a wretch love rendered me? Affection to the strongest height I am capable of, to a man of my Sylvander's merit; if it did not lead me into weaknesses and follies my heart utterly condemns. I am convinced without the approbation of Heaven and my own mind, existence would be to me a heavy curse. Sylvander, why do not your Clarinda's repeated levities cure the too passionate fondness you express for her? Perhaps it has a little removed esteem. But I dare not touch this string; it would fill up the cup of my present misery. O Sylvander, may the friendship of that God you and I have too much neglected to secure, be henceforth our chief study and delight. I cannot live deprived of the consciousness of this favor. I feel something of this awful state all this day. Nay, while I approached God with my lips, my heart was not fully there.

Mr. Locke's posthumous letter ought to be written in letters of gold. What heartfelt joy does the consciousness of having done well in any one instance confer; and what agony the reverse! Do not be displeased when I tell you I wish our parting was over. At a distance we shall retain the same heartfelt affection and interestedness in each other's concerns; but absence will mellow and restrain those violent heart-agita-

tions which, if continued much longer, would unhinge my very soul, and render me unfit for the duties of life.

You and I are capable of that ardency of love for which the wide creation cannot afford an adequate object. Let us seek to repose it in the bosom of our God. Let us next give a place to those dearest on earth—the tender charities of parent, sister, child! I bid you good-night with this short prayer of Thomson's—

> "Father of Light and Life, thou Good Supreme!
> O teach us what is good—teach us Thyself!
> Save us from folly, vanity, and vice," &c.

Your letter—I should have liked had it contained a little of the last one's seriousness. Bless me! you must not flatter so; but it's in a "merry mood," and I make allowances. Part of some of your encomiums I know I deserve; but you are far out when you enumerate "strength of mind" among them. I have not even an ordinary share of it; every passion does what it will with me; and all my life, I have been guided by the impulse of the moment—unsteady and weak! I thank you for the letter, though it sticket my prayer. Why did you tell me you drank away Reason, that "heaven-lighted lamp in man?" When Sylvander utters a calm, sober sentiment, he is never half so charming. I have read several of these in your last letter with vast pleasure. Good night!

Friday Morning [25 *Jan.*]

My servant (who is a good soul)* will deliver you this. She is going down to Leith, and will return about two or three o'clock. I have ordered her to call then, in case you have ought to say to Clarinda to-day. I am better of that sickness at heart I had yesterday; but there's a sting remains, which will not be removed until I am at peace with Heaven and myself. Another interview, spent as we ought, will help to procure this. A day when the sun shines gloriously always makes me devout! I hope 'tis an earnest (to-day) of being soon restored to the "light of His countenance" who is the source of love and standard of perfection. Adieu!

CLARINDA.

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* Was this Jenny Clow,—who is referred to in letter from Clarinda November, 1791, in a bad fix? See page 131, *infra*.—G. G.

(19) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Friday, January 25th.*]

CLARINDA, my life, you have wounded my soul. Can I think of your being unhappy, even though it be not described in your pathetic elegance of language, without being miserable? Clarinda, can I bear to be told from you that "you will not see me to-morrow night—that you wish the hour of parting were come!" Do not let us impose on ourselves by sounds. If, in the moment of fond endearment and tender dalliance, I perhaps trespassed against the *letter* of decorum's law, I appeal even to you, whether I ever sinned, in the very least degree, against the *spirit* of her strictest statute? But why, my love, talk to me in such strong terms; every word of which cuts me to the very soul? You know a hint, the slightest signification of your wish, is to me a sacred command.

Be reconciled, my angel, to your God, yourself, and me; and I pledge you Sylvander's honor—an oath, I daresay, you will trust without reserve, that you shall never more have reason to complain of his conduct. Now, my love, do not wound our next meeting with any averted looks or restrained caresses. I have marked the line of conduct—a line I know, exactly to your taste—and which I will inviolably keep; but do not you show the least inclination to make boundaries. Seeming distrust, where you know you may confide, is a cruel sin against sensibility.

"Delicacy, you know, it was which won me to you at once; take care you do not loosen the dearest, most sacred tie that unites us." Clarinda, I would not have stung *your* soul, I would not have bruised

your spirit, as that harsh, crucifying "Take care" did *mine;* no, not to have gained heaven! Let me again appeal to your dear self, if Sylvander, even when he seemingly half-transgressed the laws of decorum, if he did not shew more chastened trembling, faltering delicacy, than the many of the world do in keeping these laws?

O Love and Sensibility, ye have conspired against my Peace! I love to madness, and I feel to torture! Clarinda, how can I forgive myself that I have ever touched a single chord in your bosom with pain! would I do it willingly? Would any consideration, any gratification, make me do so? Oh, did you love like me, you would not, you could not, deny or put off a meeting with the man who adores you—who would die a thousand deaths before he would injure you; and who must soon bid you a long farewell!

I had proposed bringing my bosom friend, Mr. Ainslie, to-morrow evening, at his strong request, to see you; as he has only time to stay with us about ten minutes, for an engagement. But I shall hear from you—this afternoon, for Mercy's sake! for, till I hear from you, I am wretched. O Clarinda, the tie that binds me to thee is intwisted—incorporated with my dearest threads of life! SYLVANDER.

[Clarinda could not resist the foregoing passionate appeal. Another meeting took place on Friday night (the poet's birthday) and Sylvander's visit was repeated on the night of Saturday—both of which facts the following short letter discloses.]

(20) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Saturday 26th Jan.*]

I WAS on the way, *my love*, to meet you (I never do things by halves) when I got your card. Mr. Ainslie goes out of town to-morrow morning, to see a

brother of his who is newly arrived from France. I am determined that he and I shall call on you together; so, look you, lest I should never see to-morrow, we will call on you to-night. Mary and you may put off tea till about seven; at which time, in the Galloway phrase, "an the beast be to the fore, and the branks bide hale," expect the humblest of your humble servants, and his dearest friend. We propose staying only half an hour, "for ought we ken." I could suffer the lash of misery eleven months in the year, were the twelfth to be composed of hours like yesternight. You are the soul of my enjoyment; all else is of the stuff of stocks and stones.

SYLVANDER.

([21]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Sunday Noon [*Jan. 27th.*]

I HAVE almost given up the Excise idea. I have been just now to wait on a great person, Miss ——'s friend, ———, why will great people not only deafen us with the din of their equipage, and dazzle us with their fastidious pomp, but they must also be so very dictatorially wise? I have been questioned like a child about my matters, and blamed and schooled for my Inscription on Stirling window. Come Clarinda! "Come, curse me Jacob; come defy me Israel?"

Sunday Night.

I have been with Miss Nimmo. She is indeed "a good soul," as my Clarinda finely says. She has reconciled me, in a good measure, to the world, with her friendly prattle.

Schetki has sent me the song, set to a fine air of

his composing. I have called the song "Clarinda." I have carried it about in my pocket and hummed it over all day.

Monday Morning.

If my prayers have any weight in heaven, this morning looks in on you and finds you in the arms of Peace, except where it is charmingly interrupted by the ardors of Devotion. I find so much serenity of mind, so much positive pleasure, so much fearless daring toward the world, when I warm in devotion, or feel the glorious sensation — a consciousness of Almighty friendship, that I am sure I shall soon be an honest enthusiast.

"How are thy servants blest, O Lord!
How sure is their defence!
Eternal Wisdom is their guide,
Their help, Omnipotence!"

I am, my dear Madam, yours SYLVANDER.

(14) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Sunday, 8 *Ev.* [27*th Jan.*]

SYLVANDER, when I think of you as my *dearest* and most attached *friend*, I am highly pleased; but when you come across my mind as my *lover*, something within gives a *sting* resembling that of guilt! Tell me why is this? It must be from the idea that I am another's. What? another's wife! O cruel Fate! I am indeed bound in an "iron chain!" Forgive me, if this should give you pain. You know I must (I told you I *must*) tell you my genuine feelings, or be silent. Last night we were happy! beyond what the bulk of mankind can conceive! Perhaps the "line" you had mark'd was a *little* infringed—it was really; but, tho' I *disapprove*, I have not been *unhappy* about it. I am convinced no less of your *discernment* than of your *wish* to make your Clarinda happy. I know you *sincere*, when you profess horror at the idea of what

would render her miserable forever. But we must *guard* against going to the *verge* of danger. Ah! my friend, much need had we to "watch and pray!" May these benevolent spirits whose office it is to "save the fall of Virtue, struggling on the brink of vice" be ever present to protect and guide us in right paths!

I had an hour's conversation to-day with my worthy friend Mr. K——p.* You'll attribute, perhaps to *this*, the above sentiments. 'Tis true, there's not one on earth has so much influence on me, except Sylvander; *partly* it has forced me to "feel along the mental intelligence." However, I've broke the ice. I confessed I had conceived a tender impression of late—that it was mutual, and that I had wish'd to unbosom myself to him (as I always did), particularly to ask if he thought I should, or not, mention it to my *friend?*† I saw he felt for me (for I was in tears); but he bewail'd that I had given my *heart*, while in my present state of bondage—wish'd I had made it friendship *only*—in short, talk'd to me in the style of a tender Parent, *anxious* for my happiness. He disapproves altogether of my saying a syllable of the matter to my friend; says it could only make him uneasy; and that I'm in no way bound to do it by any one tie. This has eased me of a *load* which has lain upon my mind ever since our intimacy. Sylvander, I wish you and Mr. K——p were acquainted—such worth and sensibility! If you had his piety and sobriety of manners, united to the shining abilities you possess! you'd be "a faultless monster which the world ne'er saw." He too has great talents. His imagination is rich, his feelings delicate, his discernment acute; yet there are *shades* in his, as in all characters: but these it would ill become Clarinda to point out. Alas! I know too many blots in my own!

Sylvander, I believe nothing were a more impracticable task than to make you feel a little of genuine Gospel *humility!* Believe me, I wish not to see you deprived of that noble fire of an exalted mind which you eminently possess. Yet a sense of your faults—a *feeling* sense of them!—were devoutly to be wish'd. Tell me, did you ever, or how oft have you smote on your breast, and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" I fancy, once or twice, when suffering from the effects of your errors. Pardon me if I be hurting your "intrinsic dignity;" it need not—even "divine Clarinda" has been in this *mortal* predicament.

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* The Rev. John Kemp, minister of Tolbooth parish church.

† Her cousin, Lord Craig.

Pray, what does Mr. Ainslie think of her! was he not astonished to find her merely human? Three weeks ago, I suppose you would have walked into her presence *unshod;* but one must *bury* even divinities when they discover symptoms of mortality! (Let *these* be interred in Sylvander's bosom!)

My dearest friend, there are two wishes uppermost in my heart; to see you think alike with Clarinda on religion; and settled in some creditable line of business. The warm interest I take in both these is perhaps the best proof of the sincerity of my friendship, as well as the earnest of its duration. As to the first, I devolve it over into the hands of the Omniscient! May He raise up friends who will effectuate the other! While I breathe these fervent wishes, think not that anything but pure *disinterested* regard prompts them. They're fond, but chimerical ideas. They are never indulged but in the hour of tender endearment, when

> ——————— "Innocence
> Looks gaily smiling on; while rosy Pleasure
> Hides young Desire amid her flowery wreath,
> And pours her cup luxuriant, mantling high
> The sparkling heavenly vintage—Love and Bliss!"

'Tis past ten; and I please myself with thinking Sylvander will be about to retire, and write to Clarinda. I fancy you'll find this *stupid* enough; but I can't be always bright; the *sun* will be *sometimes* under a cloud. Sylvander, I wish our kind feelings were more moderate; why set one's heart upon *impossibilities?* Try me merely as your friend (alas! all I ought to be): believe me, you'll find me most rational. If you'd caress the "mental intelligence" as you do the corporeal frame, indeed, Sylvander, you'd make me a philosopher. I see you fidgetting at this *violently* blasting rationality. I have a headache which brings home those things to the mind. Tomorrow I'll hear from you, I hope! This is Sunday, and not a word on our favorite subject. O fy! "divine Clarinda." I intend giving you *my* idea of Heaven in opposition to your heathenish description (which, by the by, was elegantly drawn). Mine shall be founded on Reason and supported by Scripture; but it's too late; my head aches, but my heart is affectionately yours.

Monday Morning.

I am not sorry almost at the Excise affair misgiving. You will be better out of Edin. : it is full of temptation to one of your social turn. Providence (if you be wise in future) will order something better for you. I'm half-glad you were school'd about the Inscription; 'twill be a lesson, I hope, in future. Clarinda would have lectured you on it before, "if she dared." Miss N. is a woman after my own heart. You are reconciled to the world by her "friendly prattle!" How can you talk so diminutively of the conversation of a woman of solid sense? what will you say of Clarinda's chit chat? I suppose you will give it a still more insignificant term if you durst; but it is mixed with *something* that makes it more bearable, were it even weaker than it is. Miss N. is right in both her conjectures. Ah, Sylvander! my peace *must* suffer; yours cannot. *You* think, in loving Clarinda, you are doing right; all Sylvander's eloquence cannot convince me that it is so! If I were but at liberty—Oh how I would indulge in all the luxury of *innocent* love! It is, I fear, too late to talk in this strain after indulging you and myself so much; but would Sylvander shelter his Love in Friendship's *allowed* garb, Clarinda would be much happier!

"To-morrow," did'st thou say? The time is short *now;* is it not *too* frequent? Do not sweetest dainties cloy soonest? Take your chance—come half-past eight. If anything particular occur to render it improper *to-morrow*, I'll send you word, and name another evening. Mr. Kemp is to call to-night, I believe. *He* too "trembles for my peace." Two such worthies to be interested about my foolish ladyship! The Apostle Paul, with all his rhetoric, would not reconcile me to the *great* (little souls) when I think of them and Sylvander together; but I *pity* them.

> "If e'er ambition did my fancy cheat,
> With any wish so *mean*, as to be great,
> Continue, Heav'n, far from me to remove
> The humble blessings of that life I'd love."

Till we meet, my dear Sylvander, adieu!

CLARINDA.

[The meetings at Clarinda's house became more frequent as the anticipated hour of parting drew nearer. From the preceding letter we gather that Burns proposed an interview on Tuesday 29th January. Miss Mary Peacock, already spoken of, seems to have been staying for a day or two about this period

with her friend Mrs. M'Lehose. From Sylvander's letter of Friday morning 1st February, we learn that Mary was present at an interview between the lovers on the Wednesday evening.]

(22) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*29th Jan.*]

I CANNOT go out to-day, my dearest Clarinda, without sending you half a line, by way of a sin offering; but believe me, 'twas the sin of ignorance. Could you think that I *intended* to hurt you by any thing I said yesternight? Nature has been too kind to you for your happiness, your delicacy, your sensibility.—O why should such glorious qualifications be the fruitful source of woe! You have "murdered sleep" to me last night. I went to bed, impressed with an idea that you were unhappy; and every start I closed my eyes, busy Fancy painted you in such scenes of romantic misery, that I would almost be persuaded you are not well this morning.

> "If I unwitting have offended,
> Impute it not . . . . . .
> But while we live
> But one short hour, perhaps, between us two,
> Let there be peace."

If Mary is not gone by the time this reaches you, give her my compliments. She is a charming girl, and highly worthy of the noblest love.

I send you a poem to read till I call on you this night, which will be about nine. I wish I could procure some potent spell, some fairy charm, that would protect from injury, or restore to rest that bosom chord, "trembling alive all o'er," on which hangs your peace of mind. I thought, vainly I fear I thought, that the devotion of love—love strong as

even you can feel—love guarded, invulnerably guarded by all the purity of virtue, and all the pride of honor,—I thought, such a love might make you happy. Shall I be mistaken? I can no more for hurry.

SYLVANDER.

Tuesday Morning.

(15) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Thursday, Noon [31 *Jan.*]

I HAVE been giving Mary * a convoy; the day is a genial one. Mary is a happy woman to-day. Mrs. Cockburn † has seen her "Henry," and admired it vastly. She talked of you, told her she saw you, and that her lines even met your applause. Sylvander, I share in the joy of every one; and am ready to "weep with those who weep," as well as "rejoice with those who rejoice." I wish all the human race well; my heart throbs with the large ambitious wish to see them blest; yet I seem sometimes as if born to inflict misery. What a cordial evening we had last night! I only tremble at the ardent manner Mary talks of Sylvander! She knows where his affections lie, and is quite unconscious of the eagerness of her expression. All night I could get no sleep for her admiration. I like her for it, and am proud of it; but I know how much violent admiration is akin to love.

I go out to dinner, and mean to leave this, in case of one from you to-day. Miss Chalmers's letters are charming. Why did not such a woman secure your heart? O the caprice of human nature! to fix impossibilities.

I am, however, happy you have such valuable friends. What a pity that those who will be most apt to feel your merit, will be probably among the number who have not the power of serving you! Sylvander, I never was ambitious; but of late I have wished for wealth with ardor unfelt before, to be able to say, "Be independent, thou dear friend of my heart!"

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* Mary Peacock, subsequently married Burns's friend James Gray, of the High School, Edinburgh.

† Authoress of the beautiful song "The Flowers of the Forest," commencing "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling."

What exquisite joy! Then "your head would be lifted up above your enemies." O then what little shuffling, sneaking attentions! shame on the world! Wealth and power command its adulation, while real genius and worth, without these, are neglected and contemned.

> In nature's simplest habit clad,
> No wealth nor power had he;
> Genius and worth were all he had,
> And these were all to me."

Forgive my quoting my most favorite lines. You spoke of being here to-morrow evening. I believe you would be the first to tire of our society; but I tremble for censorious remarks; however, we must be sober in our hours. I am flat to-day, so adieu! I was not so cheerful last night as I wished. Forgive me. I am yours, CLARINDA.

(23) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Friday Morn., 7 o'clock [*1st Feb.*]

YOUR fears for Mary are truly laughable. I suppose, my love, you and I showed her a scene, which perhaps made her wish that she had a swain, and one who could love like me; and 'tis a thousand pities that so good a heart as hers should want an aim—an object. I am miserably stupid this morning. Yesterday I dined with a Baronet, and sat pretty late over the bottle. And "who hath woe; who hath sorrow? they that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." Forgive me, likewise, a quotation from my favorite author. Solomon's knowledge of the world is very great. He may be looked on as the "Spectator" or "Adventurer" of his day: and it is, indeed, surprising what a sameness has ever been in human nature. The broken, but strongly characterizing hints, that the royal author gives us of the manners of the court of Jerusalem and country of Israel are, in their

great outlines, the same pictures that London and England, Versailles and France exhibit some three thousand years later. The loves in the "Song of Songs," are all in the spirit of Lady M. W. Montague, or Madame Ninon de l'Enclos; though, for my part, I dislike both the ancient and modern voluptuaries; and will dare to affirm, that such an attachment as mine to Clarinda, and such evenings as she and I have spent, are what these greatly respectable and deeply experienced Judges of Life and Love never dreamed of.

I shall be with you this evening between eight and nine, and shall keep as sober hours as you could wish. I am ever, my dear Madam, yours,

SYLVANDER.

(24) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Sunday morning [*Feb. 3rd.*]

I HAVE just been before the throne of my God, Clarinda. According to my association of ideas, my sentiments of love and friendship, I next devote myself to you. Yesternight I was happy—happiness "that the world cannot give." I kindle at the recollection; but it is a flame where "Innocence looks smiling on," and Honor stands by, a sacred guard. Your heart, your fondest wishes, your dearest thoughts, these are yours to bestow: your person is unapproachable, by the laws of your country; and he loves not as I do who would make you miserable.

You are an angel, Clarinda: you are surely no mortal that "the earth owns."—To kiss your hand, to live on your smile, is to me far more exquisite bliss than any the dearest favors that the fairest of the sex, yourself excepted, can bestow.

Sunday Evening.

You are the constant companion of my thoughts. How wretched is the condition of one who is haunted with conscious guilt, and trembling under the idea of dreaded vengeance! And what a placid calm, what a charming secret enjoyment is given to one's bosom by the kind feelings of friendship, and the fond throes of love! Out upon the tempest of Anger, the acrimonious gall of fretful Impatience, the sullen frost of lowering Resentment, or the corroding poison of withered Envy! They eat up the immortal part of man! If they spent their fury only on the unfortunate objects of them, it would be something in their favor; but these miserable passions, like traitor Iscariot, betray their lord and master.

Thou Almighty Author of peace, and goodness and love! do Thou give me the social heart that kindly tastes of every man's cup! Is it a draught of joy? warm and open my heart to share it with cordial, unenvying rejoicing! Is it the bitter potion of sorrow? melt my heart with sincerely sympathetic woe! Above all, do Thou give me the manly mind, that resolutely exemplifies in life and manners those sentiments which I would wish to be thought to possess! The friend of my soul—there may I never deviate from the firmest fidelity, and most active kindness! Clarinda, the dear object of my fondest love; there, may the most sacred, inviolate honor, the most faithful, kindling constancy, ever watch and animate my every thought and imagination!

Did you ever meet with the following lines spoken of Religion, your darling topic?

"'Tis *this*, my friend, that streaks our morning bright;
'Tis *this* that gilds the horror of our night!
When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few;
When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue;

'Tis this that wards the blow, or stills the smart,
Disarms Affliction, or repels its dart;
Within the breast bids purest rapture rise,
Bids smiling Conscience spread her cloudless skies."

I met with these verses very early in life, and was so delighted with them that I have them by me, copied at school.*

Good night, and sound rest, my dearest Clarinda!

SYLVANDER.

([16]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Wed. Even., Nine [*Feb.* 6.]

THERE is not a sentiment in your last dear letter but must meet the approbation of every worthy discerning mind—except one, "that my heart, my fondest wishes are mine to bestow." True they are not, they cannot be placed upon him who ought to have had them, but whose conduct (I dare not say more against him) has justly forfeited them. But is it not too near an infringement of the sacred obligations of marriage to bestow one's heart, wishes and thoughts upon another? Something in my soul whispers that it approaches criminality. I obey the voice. Let me cast every kind feeling into the allowed bond of Friendship. If 'tis accompanied with a shadow of a softer feeling, it shall be poured into the bosom of a merciful God! If a confession of my warmest, tenderest friendship does not satisfy you, duty forbids Clarinda should do more! Sylvander, I never expect to be happy here below! Why was I formed so susceptible of emotions I dare not indulge? Never were there two hearts formed so exactly alike as ours! No wonder our friendship is heightened by the "sympathetic glow." In reading your Life, I find the very first poems that hit your fancy, were those that first engaged mine. While almost a child, the hymn you mentioned, and another of Addison's, "When all thy mercies," &c., were my chief favorites. They are much so to this hour: and I make my boys re-

* The lines are taken from one of several sets of recommendatory addresses in rhyme, prefixed to old editions of *Hervey's Meditations*, a book that had an immense circulation in Scotland during last century.—G. G.

peat them every Sabbath day. When about fifteen, I took a great fondness for Pope's "Messiah," which I still reckon one of the sublimest pieces I ever met with.

Sylvander, I believe our friendship will be lasting; its basis has been virtue, similarity of tastes, feelings, and sentiments. Alas! I shudder at the idea of one hundred miles distance. You'll hardly write me once a month, and other objects will weaken your affection for Clarinda! Yet I cannot believe so. Oh, let the scenes of Nature remind you of Clarinda! In Winter, remember the dark shades of her fate; in Summer, the warmth, the cordial warmth of her friendship; in Autumn, her glowing wishes to bestow plenty on all; and let Spring animate you with hopes, that your friend may yet live to surmount the wintry blasts of life, and revive to taste a springtime of happiness! At all events, Sylvander, the storms of life "will quickly pass, and one unbounded Spring encircle all." * There, Sylvander, I trust we'll meet. Love *there* is not a crime. I charge you to meet me there. O God!—I must lay down my pen.

I repent, almost, flattering your writing talents so much: I can see you know all the merit you possess. The allusion of "the key" is true;† therefore I won't recant it; but I rather was too humble about my own letters. I have met with several who wrote worse than myself, and few, of my own sex, better; so I don't give you great credit for being fashed with them.

Sylvander, I have things with different friends I can't tell to another, yet am not hurt; but I told you of that particular friend: he was, for near four years, the one I confided in. He is very worthy, and answers your description in the "Epistle to J. S." exactly. When I had hardly a friend to care for me in Edinburgh, he befriended me.‡ I saw, too soon, 'twas with him a warmer feeling: perhaps a little infection was the natural effect. I told you the circumstance which helped to eradicate the tender impression in me; but I perceive (though he never tells me so)—I see it in every instance, *his* prepossession still remains. I esteem him as a faithful friend; but I can never feel more for him. I fear he's not convinced of that. He sees no man with me half so often as himself; and thinks I surely am at least partial to no other. I cannot bear to deceive one

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* "The storms of Wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all."—*Thomson's Winter.*

† See Clarinda's letters of 16th January and of 19th January, *supra.*

‡ Evidently referring to her cousin, Lord Craig.

in so tender a point, and am hurt at his harboring an attachment I can never return. I have thoughts of owning my intimacy with Sylvander, but a thousand things forbid it. I should be tortured with Jealousy, that "green-eyed monster;" and besides I fear 'twould wound his peace. 'Tis a delicate affair. I wish your judgment on it. O Sylvander, I cannot bear to give pain to any creature, far less to one who pays me the attention of a brother!

I never met with a man congenial, perfectly congenial to myself but *one*—ask no questions. Is Friday to be the last night? I wish, Sylvander, you'd steal away—I cannot bear farewell! I can hardly relish the idea of meeting—for the idea! but we will meet again, at least in Heaven, I hope. Sylvander, when I survey myself, my returning weaknesses, I am consoled that my hopes, my immortal hopes, are founded in the complete righteousness of a compassionate Saviour. "In all our afflictions He is afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence guards us."

I am charmed with the lines on Religion, and with you for relishing them. I only wish the world saw you as you appear in your letters to me. Why did you send forth to them the "Holy Fair," &c.? Had Clarinda known you, she would have held you in her arms till she had your promise to suppress them. Do not publish the "Moor-hen": do not for your sake, and for mine. I wish you vastly to hear my valued friend, Mr. Kemp. Come to hear him on Sunday afternoon. 'Tis the first favor I have asked you: I expect you will not refuse me. You'll easily get a seat. Your favorite, Mr. Gould, I admired much. His composition is elegant indeed; but 'tis like beholding a beautiful superstructure built on a sandy foundation: 'tis fine to look upon; but one dares not abide in it with safety. Mr. Kemp's* language is very good—perhaps not such studied periods as Mr. G.'s; but he is far more animated. He is pathetic in a degree that touches one's soul! and then, 'tis all built upon a rock.

I could chide you for the Parting Song. You "may reca'," by being wise in future, "your friend as yet." It wrings my heart. I will be your friend for ever! Good night! God bless you! prays CLARINDA.

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* The Rev. John Kemp was about 43 years of age at this time; he was minister of the Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh, and had D.D. conferred upon him soon after 1788. About 1804 an action for *crim. con.* was brought against him by Sir James Colquhoun, of Luss, but both plaintiff and defendant died in 1805, before the case was reached for trial.—G. G.

Thursday Noon.

I shall go to-morrow forenoon to Miers* alone: 'tis quite a usual thing I hear. Mary is not in town, and I don't care to ask Miss Nimmo, or any body else. What size do you want

PORTRAITS OF BURNS AND CLARINDA,
BY MIERS OF EDINBURGH, 1785–1787.

it about? O Sylvander, if you wish my peace, let Friendship be the word between us: I tremble at more. "Talk not of Love," &c. To-morrow I'll expect you. Adieu!

CLARINDA.

* A portrait artist then residing in Edinburgh: Burns had his portrait taken in the latter end of 1787, a copy of which we have placed above. Clarinda's was taken February 1788, another portrait of her at 48 will be found on the frontispiece to this Vol., and another of her, aged 80, page 145, *infra*.—G. G.

(25) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Thursday Night [*Feb. 7th.*]

I CANNOT be easy, my Clarinda, while any sentiment respecting me in your bosom gives you pain. If there is no man on earth to whom your heart and affections are justly due, it may savour of imprudence, but never of criminality, to bestow that heart and those affections where you please. The God of love meant and made those delicious attachments to be bestowed on somebody; and even all the imprudence lies in bestowing them on an unworthy object. If this reasoning is conclusive, as it certainly is, I must be allowed to "talk of Love."

It is, perhaps, rather wrong to speak highly to a friend of his letter; it is apt to lay one under a little restraint in their future letters, and restraint is the death of a friendly epistle; but there is one passage in your last charming letter, Thomson nor Shenstone never exceeded it, nor often came up to it. I shall certainly steal it, and set it in some future poetic production, and get immortal fame by it. 'Tis when you bid the scenes of nature remind me of Clarinda. Can I forget you, Clarinda? I would detest myself as a tasteless, unfeeling, insipid, infamous blockhead! I have loved women of ordinary merit, whom I could have loved for ever. You are the first, the only unexceptionable individual of the beauteous sex that I ever met with; and never woman more entirely possessed my soul. I know myself, and how far I can depend on passions, well. It has been my peculiar study.

I thank you for going to Miers. Urge him, for necessity calls, to have it done by the middle of next

week: Wednesday the latest day. I want it for a breast-pin, to wear next my heart. I propose to keep sacred set times, to wander in the woods and wilds for meditation on you. Then, and only then, your lovely image shall be produced to the day, with a reverence akin to devotion.

* * * * * * *

To-morrow night shall not be the last. Good night! I am perfectly stupid, as I supped late yesternight.

SYLVANDER.

[Four or five letters addressed by Clarinda to Sylvander about this time have been lost. The "particular friend" referred to by Clarinda in her letter of Feb. 6th; and perhaps one or two others, including Mr. Kemp, the lady's spiritual adviser, had interfered; and from that source must have emanated the "puritanic scrawl" and the "haughty dictatorial letter" commented on by Sylvander in the next two items of the correspondence.—*Douglas.*]

(26) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Wed. Feb.* 13.]

MY EVER DEAREST CLARINDA,—I make a numerous dinner-party wait me while I read yours and write this. Do not require that I should cease to love you, to adore you in my soul; 'tis to me impossible: your peace and happiness are to me dearer than my soul. Name the terms on which you wish to see me, to correspond with me, and you have them. I must love, pine, mourn, and adore in secret: this you must not deny me. You will ever be to me

> "Dear as the light that visits those sad eyes,
> Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart."*

*Quoted incorrectly from Shakspeare's "Julius Cæsar."

I have not patience to read the Puritanic scrawl. Damned sophistry. Ye heavens, thou God of nature, thou Redeemer of mankind! ye look down with approving eyes on a passion inspired by the purest flame, and guarded by truth, delicacy, and honor; but the half inch soul of an unfeeling, cold-blooded, pitiful Presbyterian bigot cannot forgive anything above his dungeon-bosom and foggy head.

Farewell! I'll be with you to-morrow evening; and be at rest in your mind. I will be yours in the way you think most to your happiness. I dare not proceed. I love, and will love you; and will, with joyous confidence, approach the throne of the Almighty Judge of men with your dear idea; and will despise the scum of sentiment, and the mist of sophistry.

SYLVANDER.

([27]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Wednesday, Midnight [*Feb. 13th.*]

MADAM,—After a wretched day, I am preparing for a sleepless night. I am going to address myself to the Almighty Witness of my actions—some time, perhaps very soon, my Almighty Judge. I am not going to be the advocate of Passion: be Thou my inspirer and testimony, O God, as I plead the cause of truth!

I have read over your friend's haughty dictatorial letter: you are only answerable to your God in such a matter. Who gave any fellow-creature of yours (a fellow-creature incapable of being your judge, because not your peer) a right to catechise, scold, undervalue, abuse, and insult, wantonly and unhumanly to insult you thus? I don't wish, not even *wish* to deceive you, Madam. The Searcher of hearts is my witness

how dear you are to me; but though it were possible you could be still dearer to me, I would not even kiss your hand, at the expense of your conscience. Away with declamation! let us appeal to the bar of common sense. It is not mouthing everything sacred; it is not vague ranting assertions; it is not assuming, haughtily and insultingly assuming, the dictatorial language of a Roman Pontiff, that must dissolve a union like ours. Tell me, Madam, are you under the least shadow of an obligation to bestow your love, tenderness, caresses, affections, heart and soul, on Mr. M'Lehose — the man who has repeatedly, habitually, and barbarously broken through every tie of duty, nature or gratitude to you? The laws of your country indeed, for the most useful reasons of policy and sound government, have made your person inviolate; but are your heart and affections bound to one who gives not the least return of either to you? You cannot do it; it is not in the nature of things that you are bound to do it; the common feelings of humanity forbid it. Have you then, a heart and affections which are no man's right? You have. It would be highly, ridiculously absurd to suppose the contrary. Tell me then, in the name of common sense, can it be wrong, is such a supposition compatible with the plainest ideas of right and wrong, that it is improper to bestow the heart and these affections on another—while that bestowing is not in the smallest degree hurtful to your duty to God, to your children, to yourself, or to society at large?

This is the great test; the consequences: let us see them. In a widowed, forlorn, lonely situation, with a bosom glowing with love and tenderness, yet so delicately situated that you cannot indulge these nobler feelings except you meet with a man who has a soul capable of * * * * * *

(SYLVANDER.)

(28) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Thursday, 14th Feb.*]

"I AM distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan!" I have suffered, Clarinda, from your letter. My soul was in arms at the sad perusal: I dreaded that I had acted wrong. If I have wronged you, God forgive me! But, Clarinda, be comforted: let us raise the tone of our feelings a little higher and bolder. A fellow-creature who leaves us, who spurns us without just cause, though once our bosom friend—up with a little honest pride—let them go! How shall I comfort you, who am the cause of the injury? Can I wish that I had never seen you? that we had never met? No, I never will! But have I thrown you friendless?—there is almost distraction in the thought. Father of mercies! against Thee often have I sinned: through Thy grace I will endeavor to do so no more. She who, Thou knowest, is dearer to me than myself—pour Thou the balm of peace into her past wounds, and hedge her about with Thy peculiar care, all her future days and nights. Strengthen her tender, noble mind firmly to suffer, and magnanimously to bear! Make me worthy of that friendship—that love she honors me with. May my attachment to her be pure as devotion, and lasting as immortal life. O Almighty Goodness, hear me! Be to her, at all times, particularly in the hour of distress or trial, a Friend and Comforter, a Guide and Guard.

> "How are Thy servants blest, O Lord,
> How sure is their defence!
> Eternal Wisdom is their guide,
> Their help Omnipotence."

Forgive me, Clarinda, the injury I have done you. To-night I shall be with you, as indeed I shall be ill at ease till I see you. SYLVANDER.

(29) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

Two o'clock [*Thursday, 14th Feb.*]

I JUST now received your first letter of yesterday, by the careless negligence of the penny post. Clarinda, matters are grown very serious with us: then seriously hear me, and hear me Heaven!

I met you, my dear Clarinda, by far the first of womankind, at least to me. I esteemed, I loved you at first sight, both of which attachments you have done me the honor to return. The longer I am acquainted with you, the more innate amiableness and worth I discover in you. You have suffered a loss, I confess for my sake; but if the firmest, steadiest, warmest friendship; if every endeavor to be worthy of your friendship; if a love, strong as the ties of nature, and holy as the duties of religion; if all these can make anything like a compensation for the evil I have occasioned you; if they be worth your acceptance, or can in the least add to your enjoyments—so help Sylvander, ye Powers above, in his hour of need, as he freely gives these all to Clarinda!

I esteem you, I love you as a friend; I admire you, I love you as a woman, beyond any one in all the circle of creation. I know I shall continue to esteem you, to love you, to pray for you, nay, to pray for myself for your sake.

Expect me at eight; and believe me to be ever, my dearest Madam, yours most entirely,

SYLVANDER.

(30) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[*Friday, 15th Feb.*]

WHEN matters, my love, are desperate, we must put on a desperate face;

> "——— On reason build resolve,
> That column of true majesty in man."

or, as the same author finely says in another place,—

> ———'Let thy soul spring up,
> And lay strong hold for help on Him that made thee.'

I am yours, Clarinda, for life. Never be discouraged at all this. Look forward; in a few weeks I shall be somewhere or other out of the possibility of seeing you: till then I shall write you often, but visit you seldom. Your fame, your welfare, your happiness are dearer to me than any gratification whatever. Be comforted, my love! the present moment is the worst; the lenient hand of Time is daily and hourly either lightening the burden, or making us insensible to the weight. None of these friends, I mean Mr. Kemp and the other gentleman, can hurt your worldly support: and for their friendship, in a little time you will learn to be easy, and, by and by, to be happy without it. A decent means of livelihood in the world, an approving God, a peaceful conscience, and one firm trusty friend—can anybody that has these be said to be unhappy? These are yours.

To-morrow evening I shall be with you about eight, probably for the last time, till I return to Edinburgh. In the meantime, should any of these two unlucky friends question you respecting me, whether I am *the Man*, I do not think they are entitled to any information. As to their jealousy and spying, I despise them. Adieu! my dearest Madam, SYLVANDER.

[At the favorite hour and night of meeting (Saturday), the closing interview, at this period, between the distressed lovers took place.

Burns had fixed that on Monday, 18th February, he should leave Edinburgh on a journey involving about three weeks absence. A letter from every stage was promised; and, in order to gratify her religious enthusiasm, he vowed "to meet her at the Throne of Grace" exactly at 8 p.m. of every Sunday during their separation.]

([31]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

GLASGOW, *Monday Evening*, 9 *o'clock*, [*Feb.* 18.]

THE attraction of Love, I find, is in an inverse proportion to the attraction of the Newtonian philosophy. In the system of Sir Isaac, the nearer objects are to one another, the stronger is the attractive force: in my system, every milestone that marked my progress from Clarinda, awakened a keener pang of attachment to her. How do you feel, my love? is your heart ill at ease? I fear it. God forbid that these persecutors should harass that peace which is more precious to me than my own! Be assured I shall ever think of you, muse on you, and, in my moments of devotion, pray for you. The hour that you are not in my thoughts — "be that hour darkness! let the shadows of death cover it! let it not be numbered in the hours of the day!"

> —— "When I forget the darling theme,
> Be my tongue mute! my fancy paint no more!
> And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!"

I have just met with my old friend, the ship captain* — guess my pleasure! to meet you could alone have given me more. My brother William, too, the

* Mr. Richard Brown.

young saddler, has come to Glasgow to meet me; and here are we three spending the evening.

I arrived here too late to write by post; but I'll wrap half a dozen sheets of blank paper together, and send it by the Fly, under the name of a parcel. You shall hear from me next post town. I would write you a longer letter, but for the present circumstances of my friend.

Adieu, my Clarinda! I am just going to propose your health by way of grace-drink. SYLVANDER.

([17]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

EDIN., *Tuesday Even.*, 9 *o'clock* [19*th Feb.*].

MR. ———* has just left me, after half an hour's most pathetic conversation. I told him of the usage I had met with on Sunday night, which he condemned much, as unmanly and ungenerous. I expressed my thanks for his call; but he told me it was "merely to hide the change in his friendship from the world." Think how I was mortified! I was indeed; and affected so, as hardly to restrain tears. He did not name you, but spoke in terms that showed plainly he knew. Would to God he knew my Sylvander as I do! then might I hope to retain his friendship still; but I have made my choice, and you alone can ever make me repent it. Yet, while I live, I must regret the loss of such a man's friendship. My dear generous friend of my soul does so too. I love him for it! Yesterday I thought of you, and went over to Miss Nimmo, to have the luxury of talking of you. She was most kind; and praised you more than ever, as a man of worth, honor, genius. O how I could have listened to her for ever! She says she is afraid our attachment will be lasting. I stayed tea, was asked kindly, and did not choose to refuse, as I stayed last time when you were of the party. I wish you were here to-night to comfort me. I feel hurt and depressed; but to-morrow I

* Craig.

hope for a cordial from your dear hand! I must bid you good night. Remember your Clarinda. Every blessing be yours!

Your letter this moment. Why did you write before to-day? Thank you for it. I figure your heartfelt enjoyment last night. O to have been of the party! Where was it? I'd like to know the very spot. My head aches, so I can't write more; but I have kissed your dear lines over and over. Adieu! I'll finish this to-morrow.—Your CLARINDA.

Wednesday, Eleven a.m.

Mary was at my bedside by eight this morning. We had much chat about you. She is an affectionate, faithful soul. She tells me that her defence of you was so warm, in a large company where you were blamed for some trivial affair, that she left them impressed with the idea of being in love. She laughs, and says, "'tis a pity to have the skaith, and nothing for her pains."

My spirits are greatly better to-day. I am a little anxious about Willie; his leg is to be lanced this day, and I shall be fluttered till the operation is fairly over. Mr Wood thinks he will soon get well, when the matter lodged in it is discussed. God grant it! Oh, how can I ever be ungrateful to that good Providence who has blest me with so many undeserved mercies, and saved me often from the ruin I courted! The heart that feels its continual dependence on the Almighty is bound to keep His laws, by a tie stronger and tenderer than any human obligation. The feeling of Honor is a noble and powerful one; but can we be honorable to a fellow creature, and basely unmindful of our Bountiful Benefactor to whom we are indebted for life and all its blessings; and even for those very distinguishing qualities, Honor, Genius and Benevolence?

I am sure you enter into these ideas; did you think with me in all points I should be too happy; but I'll be silent. I may wish and pray, but you shall never again accuse me of presumption. My dear, I write this to Mauchline, to be waiting you. I hope, nay I am sure, 'twill be welcome.

You are an extravagant prodigal in more essential things than affection. To-day's post would have brought me yours, and saved you sixpence. However it pleased me to know that, "though absent in body, you were present with me in spirit."

Do you know a Miss Nelly Hamilton in Ayr, daughter to Captain John Hamilton of the Excise cutter? I stayed with her at Kailzie, and love her. She is a dear, amiable, roman-

tic girl. I wish much to write to her, and will enclose it for you to deliver personally if agreeable. She raved about your poems in summer, and wished to be acquainted. Let me know if you have any objections. She is an intimate of Miss Nimmo too. I think the streets look deserted-like since Monday; and there's a certain insipidity in good kind of folks I once enjoyed not a little. You who are a casuist, explain these deep enigmas. Miss Wardrope supped here on Monday. She once named you, which kept me from falling asleep. I drank your health in a glass of ale (as the lasses do at Hallowe'en) "in to mysel'."

Happy Sylvander! to meet with the dear charities of brother, sister, parent! whil'st I have none of these, and belong to nobody. Yes I have my children, and my heart's friend, Sylvander —the only one I have found capable of that nameless, delicate attachment, which none but noble, romantic minds can comprehend. I envy you the Captain's society. Don't tell him of the "Iron Chain," lest he call us both fools. I saw the happy trio in my mind's eye. So absence increases your fondness, 'tis ever so in great souls. Let the poor worldlings enjoy—*possess*, I mean, for they can't enjoy—their golden dish; we have each of us an estate, derived from the Father of the universe, into whose hands I trust we'll return it, cultivated so as to prove an inexhaustible treasure through the endless ages of eternity!

Afternoon.

Mr. Wood has not come, so the affair is not over. I hesitate about sending this till I hear further; but I think you said you'd be at Mauchline on Thursday: at any rate you'll get this on your arrival.

Farewell! may you ever abide under the shadow of the Almighty.—Yours CLARINDA.

(32) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

KILMARNOCK, *Friday* [*February 22d.*]

I WROTE you, my dear Madam, the moment I alighted in Glasgow. Since then I have not had opportunity: for in Paisley, where I arrived next day,

my worthy, wise friend, Mr. Patterson,* did not allow me a moment's respite. I was there ten hours; during which time I was introduced to nine men worth six thousands; five men worth ten thousands; his brother, richly worth twenty thousands; and a young weaver, who will have thirty thousands good, when his father, who has no more children than the said weaver, and a Whig kirk, dies. Mr. P. was bred a zealous Anti-burgher; but, during his widowerhood, he has found their strictness incompatible with certain compromises he is often obliged to make with those Powers of darkness—the devil, the world, and the flesh: so he, good, merciful man! talked privately to me of the absurdity of eternal torments; the liberality of sentiment in indulging the honest instincts of nature; the mysteries of * * * &c. He has a son, however, that, at sixteen, has repeatedly hinted at certain privileges, only proper for sober, staid men, who can use the good things of this life without abusing them; but the father's parental vigilance has hitherto hedged him in, amid a corrupt and evil world.

His only daughter, who, "if the beast be to the fore, and the branks bide hale," will have seven thousand pounds when her old father steps into the dark Factory-office of Eternity with his well-thummed web of life, has put him again and again in a commendable fit of indignation, by requesting a harpsichord. "O! these boarding-schools!" exclaims my prudent friend. "She was a good spinner and sewer, till I was advised by her foes and mine to give her a year of Edinburgh!"

After two bottles more, my much-respected friend opened up to me a project, a legitimate child of Wisdom and Good Sense; 'twas no less than a long thought-on and deeply-matured design to marry a girl,

* This is the correspondent to whom the poet addressed a letter, May 7th, 1787.

fully as elegant in her form as the famous priestess whom Saul consulted in his last hours, and who had been second maid of honor to his deceased wife. This, you may be sure, I highly applauded, so I hope for a pair of gloves by and by. I spent the two bypast days at Dunlop House with that worthy family to whom I was deeply indebted early in my poetic career; and in about two hours I shall present your "twa wee sarkies" to the little fellow.* My dearest Clarinda, you are ever present with me; and these hours, that drawl by among the fools and rascals of this world, are only supportable in the idea, that they are the forerunners of that happy hour that ushers me to "the mistress of my soul." Next week I shall visit Dumfries, and next again return to Edinburgh. My letters, in these hurrying dissipated hours, will be heavy trash; but you know the writer.—God bless you.

SYLVANDER.

([18]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES. 1843.)

EDIN[R]., *Friday Ev.*, [*22nd Feb.*]

I WISH you had given me a hint, my dear Sylvander, that you were to write to me only once in a week. Yesterday I looked for a letter; to-day never doubted it; but both days have terminated in disappointment. A thousand conjectures have conspired to make me most unhappy. Often have I suffered much disquiet from forming the idea of such an attention, on such and such an occasion, and experienced quite the reverse. But in you, and you alone, I have ever found my highest demands of kindness accomplished; nay, even my fondest wishes, not gratified only, but anticipated! To what then can I attribute your not writing me one line since Monday?

* Clarinda, it seems, had given him two little shirts for his and Jean's little son Robert.

God forbid that your nervous ailment has incapacitated you for that office from which you derived pleasure singly; as well as that most delicate of all enjoyments, pleasure reflected. To-morrow I shall hope to hear from you. Hope, blessed Hope, thou balm of every woe, possess and fill my bosom with thy benign influence!

I have been solitary since the tender farewell till to-night. I was solicited to go to Dr. Moyes's Lecture with Miss Craig and a gallant of hers, a student; one of the many stupid animals, knowing only in the Science of Puppyism, or "the nice conduct of a clouded cane." With what sovereign contempt did I compare his trite, insipid frivolity with the intelligent, manly observation which ever marks the conversation of Sylvander. He is a glorious piece of Divine workmanship, Dr. Moyes.* The subject to-night was the origin of minerals, springs, lakes, and the ocean. Many parts were far beyond my weak comprehension, and indeed that of most women. What I understood delighted me, and altogether raised my thoughts to the infinite wisdom, and boundless goodness of the Deity. The man himself marks both. Presented with a universal blank of Nature's works, his mind appears to be illuminated with Celestial light. He concluded with some lines of the Essay on Man:—"All are but parts of one stupendous whole," &c., a passage I have often read with sublime pleasure.

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* Dr. Moyes never took high rank as a scientist, but we find twenty years after the date of Clarinda's letter that he was still a favorite with the Edinburgh ladies. See the following extract from *The Scotts' Magazine:*

THE EDINBURGH LADIES' PETITION TO DR. MOYES.

Dear Doctor, let it not transpire
How much your lectures we admire,
How at your eloquence we wonder,
When you explain the cause of thunder;
Of lightning and of electricity,
With so much plainness and simplicity;
The origin of rocks and mountains,
Of seas and rivers, lakes and fountains,
Of rain and hail, of frost and snow,
And all the winds and storms that blow;
Besides an hundred wonders more,
Of which we never heard before.
But now, dear Doctor, not to flatter,
There is a most important matter,
A matter which you never touch on,
A matter which our thoughts run much on,
A subject, if we right conjecture,
Which well deserves a long, long lecture,

Miss Burnet sat behind me. What an angelic girl! I stared at her, never having seen her so near. I remember you talking of her, &c. What felicity to witness her "softly speak and sweetly smile!" How could you celebrate any other Clarinda! O I would have adored you, as Pope of exquisite taste and refinement, had you loved, sighed, and written upon her for ever! breathing your passion only to the woods and streams. But Poets, I find, are not quite incorporeal, more than others. My dear Sylvander, to be serious, I really wonder you ever admired Clarinda after beholding Miss Burnet's superior charms. If I don't hear to-morrow, I shall form dreadful reasons. God forbid! Bishop Geddes was within a foot of me too. What field for contemplation—both! Good night. God bless you! prays CLARINDA.

(33) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.*

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

[MOSSGIEL, *Sat.* 23 *Feb.*, 1788.]

I HAVE just now, my ever dear Madam, delivered your kind present to my sweet little Bobbie, whom I find a very fine fellow. Your letter was waiting me. Your interview with Mr. Kemp opens a wound, ill-closed, in my breast; not that I think his friendship of so much consequence to you, but because you set such a value on it.

Now for a little news that will please you. I, this morning, as I came home, called for a certain woman.

Which all the ladies would approve—
The Natural History of Love.
Oh! list to our united voice,
Deny us not, dear Dr. Moyes;
* * * * * *
Dear Doctor, if you grant our wishes,
We promise you five hundred kisses;
And rather than the affair be blunder'd,
We'll give you six score to the hundred.
Approved by 300 ladies, 1807.

* We take this from the columns of the *Banffshire Journal*, in which it appeared some years ago, "as printed from the original," which was described as considerably mutilated, the upper portion being cut off.—*Douglas.*

I am disgusted with her—I cannot endure her! I, while my heart smote me for the profanity, tried to compare her with my Clarinda: 'twas setting the expiring glimmer of a farthing taper beside the cloudless glory of the meridian sun. *Here* was tasteless insipidity, vulgarity of soul, and mercenary fawning; *there* polished good sense, Heaven-born genius, and the most generous, the most delicate, the most tender passion. I have done with her, and she with me.*

I set off to-morrow for Dumfries-shire. 'Tis merely out of compliment to Mr. Miller; for I know the Indies must be my lot.† I will write you from Dumfries, if these horrid postages don't frighten me.

> "Whatever place, whatever land I see,
> My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee;
> Still to 'Clarinda' turns with ceaseless pain,
> And drags at each remove a lengthen'd chain."

I just stay to write you a few lines, before I go to call on my friend, Mr. Gavin Hamilton. I hate myself as an unworthy sinner, because these interviews of old dear friends make me, for half a moment, almost forget Clarinda.

Remember to-morrow evening, at eight o'clock, I shall be with the Father of Mercies, at that hour on your own account. Farewell! If the post goes not to-night, I'll finish the other page to-morrow morning.

SYLVANDER.

P.S.—Remember.

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* Jean Armour.

† Fancy Burns in the West Indies as overseer on a plantation—a Scotch "Legree" with whip and pistol over a gang of negro slaves—imagine him striding behind them and singing his glorious song—"A Man's a Man for a' that."—G. G.

(24) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

CUMNOCK, *2d March*, 1788.

I HOPE, and am certain, that my generous Clarinda will not think my silence, for now a long week has been in any degree owing to my forgetfulness. I have been tossed about through the country ever since I wrote you; and am here returning from Dumfries-shire, at an inn, the post-office of the place, with just so long time as my horse eats his corn, to write you. I have been hurried with business and dissipation, almost equal to the insidious decree of the Persian Monarch's mandate, when he forbade asking petition of God or man for forty days. Had the venerable prophet been as throng as I, he had not broken the decree; at least not thrice a day.

I am thinking my farming scheme will yet hold. A worthy intelligent farmer, my father's friend and my own, has been with me on the spot: he thinks the bargain practicable.* I am myself, on a more serious review of the lands, much better pleased with them. I won't mention this in writing to anybody but you and Mr. Ainslie. Don't accuse me of being fickle; I have the two plans of life before me, and I wish to adopt the one most likely to procure me independence.

I shall be in Edinburgh next week. I long to see you; your image is omnipresent to me; nay, I am convinced I would soon idolatrize it most seriously; so much do absence and memory improve the medium through which one sees the much-loved object. To-night, at the sacred hour of eight, I expect to meet you at the Throne of Grace. I hope as I go home

* Mr. Tennant, of Glenconner, accompanied Burns, and chiefly by his advice the Ellisland bargain was entered upon.—G. G.

to-night, to find a letter from you at the post-office in Mauchline; I have just once seen that dear hand since I left Edinburgh; a letter indeed which much affected me. Tell me, first of womankind, will my warmest attachment, my sincerest friendship, my correspondence—will they be any compensation for the sacrifices you make for my sake? If they will, they are yours. If I settle on the farm I propose, I am just a day and a half's ride from Edinburgh. We shall meet: don't you say, "Perhaps, too often!"

Farewell, my fair, my charming Poetess! May all good things ever attend you.—I am ever, my dearest Madam, yours, SYLVANDER.

([19]) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

EDINBURGH, *March* 5, 1788.

I RECEIVED yours from Cumnock about an hour ago; and to show you my good-nature sit down to write to you immediately. I fear, Sylvander, you overvalue my generosity; for, believe me, it will be sometime ere I can cordially forgive you the pain your silence has caused me! Did you ever feel that sickness of heart which arises from "hope deferred?" That—the cruellest of pains—you have inflicted on me for eight days by-past. I hope I can make every reasonable allowance for the hurry of business and dissipation. Yet had I been ever so engrossed, I should have found one hour out of the twenty-four to write to you. No more of it. I accept of your apologies; but am hurt that any should have been necessary betwixt us on such a tender occasion.

I am happy that the farming scheme promises so well. There's no fickleness, my dear Sir, in changing for the better. I never liked the Excise for you; and feel a sensible pleasure in the hope of your becoming a sober, industrious farmer. My prayers in this affair are heard I hope, so far: may they be answered completely! The distance is the only thing I regret; but whatever tends to your welfare over-weighs all other considerations. I hope ere then to grow wiser, and to lie easy

under six weeks' silence. I had begun to think that you had fully experienced the truth of Sir Isaac's philosophy.

I have been under unspeakable obligations to your friend, Mr. Ainslie. I had not a mortal to whom I could speak of your name but him. He has called often; and by sympathy, not a little alleviated my anxiety. I tremble lest you should have devolved what you used to term your "folly," upon Clarinda: more's the pity. 'Tis never graceful but on the male side; but I shall learn more wisdom in future. Example has often good effects.

I got both your letters from Kilmarnock and Mauchline, and would, perhaps, have written to you unbidden, had I known anything of the geography of the country; but I knew not whether you would return by Mauchline or not, nor could Mr Ainslie inform me. I have met with several little rubs that hurt me the more that I had not a bosom to pour them into—

"On some fond breast the feeling soul relies."

Mary, I have not once set eyes on, since I wrote to you. O that I should be formed suscepible of kindness, never, never, to be fully, or at least, habitually returned! "Trim (said my uncle Toby), I wish, Trim, I were dead."

Mr. Ainslie called just now to tell me he had heard from you. You would see, by my last, how anxious I was, even then, to hear from you. 'Tis the first time I ever had reason to be so: I hope 'twill be the last. My thoughts were yours both Sunday nights at eight. Why should my letter have affected you? You know I count all things (Heaven excepted) but loss that I may win and keep you. I supped at Mr Kemp's on Friday. Had you been an invisible spectator with what perfect ease I acquitted myself, you would have been pleased, highly pleased with me.

Interrupted by a visit from Miss R——. She was inquiring kindly for you. I delivered your compliments to her. She means (as you once said) all the kindness in the world, but she wants that "finer chord." Ah! Sylvander, happy, in my mind, are they who are void of it. Alas! it too often "thrills with anguish."

I hope you have not forgotten to kiss the little cherub for me. Give him fifty, and think Clarinda blessing him all the while. I pity his mother sincerely, and wish a certain affair happily over. My Willie is in good health, except his leg, which confines him close since it was opened; and Mr. Wood says it will be a very tedious affair. He has prescribed sea-

bathing as soon as the season admits.* I never see Miss Nimmo. Her indifference wounds me; but all these things make me fly to the Father of Mercies, who is the inexhaustible Fountain of all kindness. How could you ever mention "postages?" I counted on a crown at least; and have only spent one poor shilling. If I had but a shilling in the world, you would have sixpence; nay, eightpence, if I could contrive to live on a groat. I am avaricious only in your letters; you are so, indeed. Farewell.—Yours, CLARINDA.

(35) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

[MAUCHLINE, 6 *March* 1788.]

I OWN myself guilty, Clarinda: I should have written you last week. But when you recollect, my dearest Madam, that yours of this night's post is only the third I have from you, and that this is the fifth or sixth I have sent to you, you will not reproach me with a good grace for unkindness. I have always some kind of idea, not to sit down to write a letter, except I have time and possession of my faculties so as to do some justice to my letter; which at present is rarely my situation. For instance, yester-

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*The little boy Willie died very shortly after this, and his mother wrote the following lines on the occasion:

ON THE LOSS OF MY CHILD, 1788.

Does Heaven behold these sadly-falling tears,
Shed by a mother o'er her darling child?
Ah, blasted hopes! and heart-distracting fears,
That fill my breast with frantic sorrow wild!

Yes, Heaven beholds; from thence the stroke descends,
And Heaven alone can heal the wounds it gave.
O, Thou, who dost afflict for gracious ends,
Lead my sad soul to scenes beyond the grave.

'Tis there alone all tears are wiped away;
There death-divided friends shall part no more.
Oh, Thou Supreme! whose years know no delay,
Teach me Thy dispensations to adore.

day I dined at a friend's at some distance ; the savage hospitality of this country spent me the most part of the night over the nauseous potion in the bowl. This day, sick—head-ache—low spirits—miserable—fasting, except for a draught of water or small beer. Now, eight o'clock at night—only able to crawl ten minutes' walk into Mauchline to wait the post, in the pleasurable hope of hearing from the mistress of my soul.

But, truce with all this ! When I sit down to write to you, all is happiness and peace. A hundred times a day do I figure you, before your taper, your book or work laid aside, as I get within the room. How happy have I been ! and how little of that scantling portion of time, called the life of man, is sacred to happiness, much less transport.

I could moralize to-night, like a death's head.

> "O, what is life, that thoughtless wish of all !
> A drop of honey in a draught of gall."

Nothing astonishes me more, when a little sickness clogs the wheels of life, than the thoughtless career we run, in the hour of health. "None saith, where is God, my Maker, that giveth songs in the night : who teacheth us more knowledge than the beasts of the field, and more understanding than the fowls of the air?"

Give me, my Maker, to remember Thee ! Give me, to act up to the dignity of my nature ! Give me, to feel "another's woe ;" and continue with me that dear-loved friend that feels with mine !

The dignifying and dignified consciousness of an honest man, and the well grounded trust in approving Heaven, are two most substantial foundations of happiness. . . .

I could not have written a page to any mortal except yourself. I'll write you by Sunday's post. Adieu. Good night. SYLVANDER.

([36]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(STEWART, 1802.)

MOSSGIEL, *7th March* 1788.

CLARINDA, I have been so stung with your reproach for unkindness, a sin so unlike me, a sin I detest more than a breach of the whole Decalogue, fifth, sixth, seventh, and ninth articles excepted, that I believe I shall not rest in my grave about it, if I die before I see you. You have often allowed me the head to judge, and the heart to feel, the influence of female excellence: was it not blasphemy then, against your own charms, and against my feelings, to suppose that a short fortnight could abate my passion! You, my Love, may have your cares and anxieties to disturb you; but they are the usual occurrences of life: your future views are fixed, and your mind in a settled routine. Could not you, my ever dearest Madam, make a little allowance for a man, after long absence, paying a short visit to a country full of friends, relations and early intimates? Cannot you guess, my Clarinda, what thoughts, what cares, what anxious forebodings, hopes and fears, must crowd the breast of the man of keen sensibility, when no less is on the tapis than his aim, his employment, his very existence through future life?

To be overtopped in anything else, I can bear; but in the tests of generous love, I defy all mankind! not even the tender, the fond, the loving Clarinda! she whose strength of attachment, whose melting soul, may vie with Eloise and Sappho, not even she can overpay me the affection she owes me!

Now that, not my apology, but my defence is made, I feel my soul respire more easily. I know you will go along with me in my justification—would to

heaven you could in my adoption too! I mean an adoption beneath the stars—an adoption where I might revel in the immediate beams of

"She the bright sun of all her sex."

I would not have you, my dear Madam, so much hurt at Miss Nimmo's coldness. 'Tis placing yourself below her, an honor she by no means deserves. We ought, when we wish to be economists in happiness; we ought in the first place, to fix the standard of our own character; and when, on full examination, we know where we stand, and how much ground we occupy, let us contend for it as property; and those who seem to doubt, or deny us what is justly ours, let us either pity their prejudices, or despise their judgment. I know, my dear, you will say this is self-conceit; but I call it self-knowledge; the one is the overweening opinion of a fool, who fancies himself to be, what he wishes himself to be thought: the other is the honest justice that a man of sense, who has thoroughly examined the subject, owes to himself. Without this standard, this column in our own mind, we are perpetually at the mercy of the petulance, the mistakes, the prejudices, nay, the very weakness and wickedness of our fellow-creatures.

I urge this, my dear, both to confirm myself in the doctrine, which, I assure you, I sometimes need; and because I know that this causes you often much disquiet. To return to Miss Nimmo: she is most certainly a worthy soul, and equalled by very, very few, in goodness of heart. But can she boast more goodness of heart than Clarinda? not even prejudice will dare to say so; for penetration and discernment, Clarinda sees far beyond her. To wit, Miss Nimmo dare make no pretence: to Clarinda's wit scarce any of her sex dare make pretence. Personal charms—it would be ridiculous to run the parallel; and for conduct in life,

Miss Nimmo was never called out, either much to do, or to suffer; Clarinda has been both, and has performed her part, where Miss Nimmo would have sunk at the bare idea.

Away then with these disquietudes! Let us pray with the honest weaver of Kilbarchan, "Lord send us a gude conceit o' oursel'!" or, in the words of the auld sang,

> "Who does me disdain, I can scorn him again,
> And I'll never mind any such foes."

There is an error in the commerce of intimacy [on brief acquaintanceship] * which has led me far astray. [We are apt to be taken in by] those who, by way of exchange, have not an equivalent to give us; and what is still worse, have no idea of the value of our goods. Happy is our lot, indeed, when we meet with an honest merchant who is qualified to deal with us on our own terms; but this is a rarity. With almost everybody, we must pocket our pearls, less or more; and learn in the old Scots phrase, "to gie siclike as we get." For this reason, we should try to erect a kind of bank or storehouse in our own minds; or, as the Psalmist recommends, "commune with your own hearts, and be still." This is exactly the [course to adopt with those who interfere with our choice of friends; for] if the friend be so peculiarly favored of Heaven as to have a soul as noble and exalted as yours, sooner or later your bosom will ache with disappointment.

I wrote you yesternight, which will reach you long before this can. I may write Mr. Ainslie before I see him, but I am not sure. Farewell! and remember

SYLVANDER.

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* The latter portion of the MS. of this letter is in a dilapidated condition, and the passages within square brackets are supplied by conjecture.—(*Douglas.*)

(20) CLARINDA TO SYLVANDER.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

EDINR., *8th March* 1788.

I WAS agreeably surprised by your answer to mine of Wednesday coming this morning. I thought it always took two days, a letter from this to Mauchline, and did not expect yours sooner than Monday. This is the fifth from you, and the fourth time I am now writing you. I hate calculating them: like some things, they don't do to be numbered. I wish you had written from Dumfries as you promised; but I do not impute it to any cause but hurry of business, &c. I hope I shall never live to reproach you with unkindness. You never ought to put off till you "have time to do justice to your letters." I have sufficient memorials of your abilities in that way; and last week, two lines to have said "How do ye, my Clarinda?" would have saved me days and nights of cruel disquietude—"A word to the wise" you know. I know human nature better than to expect always fine flights of fancy, or exertions of genius, and feel in myself the effects of this "crazy mortal coil" upon its glorious inhabitant. To-day I have a clogging headache; but however stupid, I know (at least I hope) a letter from your heart's friend will be acceptable. It will reach you to-morrow, I hope.

Shocking custom! one can't entertain with hospitality, without taxing their guests with the consequences you mention. Your reflections upon the effects which sickness has on our retrospect of ourselves, are noble. I see my Sylvander will be all I wish him, before he leaves this world. Do you remember that simple eulogium I pronounced on you, when Miss Nimmo asked what I thought of you?—"He's ane of God's ain; but his time's no come yet." It was like a speech from your worthy mother, whom I revere. She would have joined me with a heartfelt sigh, which none but mothers know. It is rather a bad picture of us, that we are most prone to call upon God in trouble. Ought not the daily blessings of health, peace, competence, friends — ought not these to awaken our constant gratitude to the Giver of all? I imagine that the heart which does not occasionally glow with filial love in the hours of prosperity, can hardly hope to feel much comfort in flying to God in the time of dis-

tress. O my dear Sylvander! that we may be enabled to set Him before us, as our witness, benefactor, and judge at all times, and on all occasions!

In the name of wonder, how could you spend ten hours with such a heathen as Mr. Pattison? What a despicable character! Religion!—he knows only the name; none of her real votaries ever wished to make any such shameful compromises. But 'tis Scripture verified; the demon of avarice, his original devil, finding him empty, called in other seven more impure spirits, and so completely infernalized him. Destitute of discernment to perceive your merit, or taste to relish it, my astonishment at his fondness of you is only surpassed by your more than Puritanic patience in listening to his shocking nonsense! I hope you renewed his certificate. I was told it was in a tattered condition some months ago, and that then he proposed putting it on parchment by way of preserving it. Don't call me severe: I hate all who would "turn the grace of God into licentiousness"; 'tis commonly the weaker part of mankind who attempt it.

"Religion, thou the soul of happiness."

Yesterday morning in bed I happened to think of you. I said to myself—"My bonie Lizzie Baillie," &c., and laughed; but I felt a delicious swell of heart, and my eyes swam in tears. I know not if your sex ever feel this burst of affection; 'tis an emotion indescribable. You see I'm grown a fool since you left me. You know I was rational when you first knew me; but I always grow more foolish the farther I am from those I love: by and by I suppose I shall be insane altogether.

I am happy your little lamb is doing so well. Did you execute my commission? You had a great stock on hand; and if any agreeable customers came in the way, you would dispose of some of them I fancy, hoping soon to be supplied with a fresh assortment. For my part, I can truly say I have had no demand. I really believe you have taught me dignity, which, partly through good nature, and partly by misfortune, had been too much laid aside; but which now I will never part with. Why should I not keep it up? Admired, esteemed, beloved, by one of the first of mankind! Not all the wealth of Peru could have purchased these. O Sylvander, I am great in my own eyes when I think how high I am in your esteem! You have shown me the merit I possess; I knew it not before.

Even Joseph* trembled t'other day in, my presence. "Husbands looked mild, and savages grew tame!" Love and cherish your friend Mr Ainslie, he is your friend indeed. I long for next week; happy days, I hope, yet await us. When you meet young Beauties, think of Clarinda's affection, of her situation, of how much her happiness depends on you. Farewell till we meet. God be with you! CLARINDA.

P.S.—Will you take the trouble to send for a small parcel left at Dunlop and Wilson's, Booksellers, Trongate, Glasgow, for me, and bring it with you in the Fly?

[Sylvander would receive the foregoing letter just before leaving Mauchline for Edinburgh, which he appears to have done on Monday 10th March, proceeding by way of Glasgow. On Thursday, the 13th, he executed his lease of the farm of Ellisland. On Monday following (the date of the next letter of this series) his entry with the Excise was finally resolved on; and he obtained his formal order for instructions as an exciseman. How often he met with Clarinda, during the first week of this fortnight spent in the city, does not appear; but in the four letters which follow, and which mark this extraordinary correspondence, the reader will not fail to observe the absence of all concern regarding the censorious remarks of Clarinda's friends and neighbors. Clarinda seems to have schooled herself, or been schooled into the most easy *sang froid* on the subject.

The last letter of the series is particularly striking in contrast with the ulterior results—the sudden collapse of this labored intrigue; for by what other phrase, on Sylvander's side, can his three months' siege of the too susceptible, but single-hearted enthusiast in love, be distinguished?]

(37) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[EDINR., *17th March* 1788.]

I WILL meet you to-morrow, Clarinda, as you appoint. My Excise affair is just concluded, and I have got my order for instructions: so far good. Wednes-

* It has never been explained who "Joseph" was. She had no son of that name.

day night I am engaged to sup among some of the principals of the Excise; so can only make a call for you that evening; but next day, I stay to dine with one of the Commissioners, so cannot go till Friday morning.

Your hopes, your fears, your cares, my love, are mine; so don't mind them. I will take you in my hand through the dreary wilds of this world, and scare away the ravening bird or beast that would annoy you. I saw Mary in town to-day, and asked her if she had seen you. I shall certainly bespeak Mr. Ainslie as you desire.

Excuse me, my dearest angel, this hurried scrawl and miserable paper; circumstances make both. Farewell till to-morrow! SYLVANDER.

Monday, Noon.

([38]) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[EDINR., 18*th March*.]

I AM just hurrying away to wait on the Great Man, Clarinda; but I have more respect to my own peace and happiness than to set out without waiting on you; for my imagination, like a child's favorite bird, will fondly flutter along this scrawl, till it perch on your bosom. I thank you for all the happiness bestowed on me yesterday. The walk—delightful; the evening—rapture. Do not be uneasy to-day, Clarinda; forgive me. I am in rather better spirits to-day, though I had but an indifferent night. Care, anxiety, sat on my spirits; and all the cheerfulness of this morning is the fruit of some serious, important ideas that lie, in their realities, beyond "the dark and the narrow

house," as Ossian, prince of poets, says. The Father of Mercies be with you, Clarinda! and every good thing attend you! SYLVANDER.

Tuesday Morning.

(39) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

Wednesday Morning [19*th March.*]

CLARINDA, will that envious night-cap hinder you from appearing at the window as I pass? "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair as the sun, clear as the moon, terrible as an army with banners?"

Do not accuse me of fond folly for this line; you know I am a cool lover. I mean by these presents greeting, to let you to wit, that arch-ras—, Cr—ch, has not done my business yesternight, which has put off my leaving town till Monday morning. To-morrow, at eleven, I meet with him for the last time; just the hour I should have met far more agreeable company.

You will tell me this evening, whether you cannot make our hour of meeting to-morrow one o'clock. I have just now written Creech such a letter, that the very goose-feather in my hand shrunk back from the line, and seemed to say, "I exceedingly fear and quake!" I am forming ideal schemes of vengeance. O for a little of my will on him! I just wished he loved as I do—as glorious an object as Clarinda—and that he were doomed.—Adieu, and think on

SYLVANDER.

(40) SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

(Clar. Corres., 1843.)

Friday, Nine o'clock, Night [21*st March.*]

I AM just now come in, and have read your letter. The first thing I did was to thank the Divine Disposer of events, that he has had such happiness in store for me as the connexion I have with you. Life, my Clarinda, is a weary, barren path; and woe be to him or her that ventures on it alone! For me, I have my dearest partner of my soul: Clarinda and I will make out our pilgrimage together. Wherever I am, I shall constantly let her know how I go on, what I observe in the world around me, and what adventures I meet with. Will it please you, my love, to get, every week, or at least, every fortnight, a packet, two or three sheets, full of remarks, nonsense, news, rhymes, and old songs?

Will you open, with satisfaction and delight, a letter from a man who loves you, who has loved you, and who will love you to death, through death, and for ever? O Clarinda! what do I owe to Heaven for blessing me with such a piece of exalted excellence as you! I call over your idea, as a miser counts over his treasure! Tell me, were you studious to please me last night? I am sure you did it to transport. How rich am I who have such a treasure as you! You know me; you know how to make me happy, and you do it most effectually. God bless you with

"Long life, long youth, long pleasure, and a friend!"

To-morrow night, according to your own direction, I shall watch the window: 'tis the star that guides me to Paradise. The great relish to all is—that Honor—that Innocence—that Religion, are the wit-

nesses and guarantees of our happiness. "The Lord God knoweth," and perhaps "Israel, he shall know" my love and your merit. Adieu Clarinda! I am going to remember you in my prayers.

SYLVANDER.*

* Mr. Douglas says, "The reader sees from the above letter that on Saturday night (22d March) the enraptured lovers were again to hold tryste in the house of Clarinda—probably for the last time until the celebrated "mirk night o' December" —the *sixth* of that month, 1791. We must take the poet's word for it, that "Honor, Innocence, and Religion were the witnesses and guarantees of their happiness." On Monday the 24th, Sylvander permanently left Edinburgh, and two days thereafter he thus wrote from Glasgow to a friend. "These eight days I have been positively crazed." We shall not question the fact; but, from that date, no more "love letters" passed between "Sylvander and Clarinda."

When Burns left Edinburgh at this time, he presented an elegant pair of drinking glasses to Clarinda, with the following verses. The glasses were carefully preserved by her, and often taken down from the open cupboard in her parlor to show to strangers. They are now in the Burns Museum, Edinburgh.

TO CLARINDA,

WITH A PRESENT OF A PAIR OF DRINKING GLASSES.*

Fair Empress of the Poet's soul,
  And Queen of Poetesses,
Clarinda, take this little boon,
  This humble pair of glasses;

And fill them high with generous juice,
  As generous as your mind,
And pledge me in the generous toast,
  "The whole of humankind!"

* See illustration of these glasses on frontispiece to this Vol.—G. G.

"To those who love us!" second fill,
But not to those whom we love;
Lest we love those who love not us.
A third, "To thee and me, love!"

[The sudden collapse of the correspondence between Burns and Clarinda which now occurs naturally gives rise to lively conjecture as to the why and wherefore.

It will be seen, subsequently, that the world has been permitted to see only such letters of this period as Clarinda cared to make public. In January, 1797, just after Burns died, Mr. John Syme, of Dumfries, a friend of the Burns family, corresponded with Clarinda respecting the publication of Burns's letters, which Dr. Currie desired for publication in the edition which he was then preparing for the press. Clarinda stipulated for the return of all her letters which Burns had, it seems, carefully preserved, and in return promised such use of Burns's letters to herself as she deemed judicious to publish. She thus, at this time, January, 1797, came into possession of the entire correspondence, and the reader may surmise the reason for some manifest blanks, especially the absence of the letters which no doubt she wrote in reply to his four latest ardent effusions, because Clarinda was not in the habit of leaving her lover's letters unanswered.

We believe that Clarinda destroyed several letters which would have shed a very warm light on this period of their intercourse.

Burns left Edinburgh on the 25th of March, 1788, and journeyed to Glasgow, whence he wrote to several friends on the 26th; thence to Dumfriesshire to see about his farm. A succession of home letters would inform him of the birth of twins by poor Jean; and on the 31st of March we find him writing from Mossgiel; a week after this he writes from Mauchline to Miss Chalmers, and in the finishing sentence of that letter we discover the current of his love has returned towards Jean.

"I have lately made some sacrifices for which, were I *viva voce* with you to paint the situation and recount the circumstances, you would applaud me."

This allusion undoubtedly means his change of intention regarding Jean.—G. G.]

Dr. Robert Chambers' comments on his course at this period are so valuable that we quote them at length:—

"It may be remarked, that the short series of letters to Clarinda, before his final departure for the county, do not breathe the same ardor as those written in the two previous months. A letter 'every week, or at least every fortnight,' is something of a

down-come from the almost daily correspondence of the last week of February. And it is remarkable that no letters of Sylvander to Clarinda between that which I have put under the 21st of March, and another written a twelvemonth after, have presented themselves. There is, indeed, no room for doubt, that at this time of passage between one kind of life and another, a revolution took place in the poet's mind regarding the disposal of himself among the various claimants of his affection. * *

It is easy to imagine how, in the first two or three weeks of his residence in Ayrshire during April, the immediate impression of his kind-hearted Jean, whose blanched cheek could not be seen without reminding him of what she had suffered for his sake, would tell on a heart which, even under deep resentment, had whispered to him that he could not but love her (how the sensibility, intelligence and cleverness of Mrs. M'Lehose, who only could be his upon a remote contingency, would in such circumstances 'pale their ineffectual fires') how even so prosaic a consideration as the immediate eligibility of Jean for the homely course of life which fate had laid out before him, would weigh with a spirit which, amidst all its vagaries, was not deficient in the economical and provident virtues of the Scottish character, and thus help in restoring the rustic damsel to what everybody will feel to have been her rightful place. One plain fact, too, manifestly operated strongly with our poet and this was, that the poor girl was in a manner thrown upon his hands. Rejected by her father, and under the ban of society, there was no resource for her but the protection of Burns. Thus it was that the renewal of their acquaintance, after the first alienation, had come to place her in a wholly different moral relation towards him from that in which it had been left by the irregular divorce of April, 1786.

"Were consistency, indeed, one of the most notable features of human nature, as the reverse is the case, we might marvel a little at Burns, on the 2d of March, meeting Clarinda in prayers at an appointed hour, and the next day speaking with levity of his intercourse with Jean, vowing to love Clarinda 'to death, through death, and forever,' in March, and before April was out, giving another woman a permanent right to his affections, albeit for the time under secrecy. * * * * * *

"So ends, for the meantime, the 'Clarinda' correspondence—a curious episode in the history of Burns. For three months he had written to this lady in the language of Eloise's lover, and been addressed by her in terms scarcely less ardent. And yet from this moment we see no further trace of her influence over his mind. She forms in no ostensible degree an obstacle to

his almost immediately surrendering himself as the husband of another woman. Was there any sincerity in the feeling he professed for her all along?"—So queries Mr. Chambers. We think there was, and that Burns went ahead on the Epicurean theory which he frequently quoted,

> "The present moment is our ain,
> The next we never saw."

There was a kind of earnestness in Sylvander's flame for Clarinda—a kind involving a good deal of self-delusion, mingled with some reality—a genuine partiality augmented to affected raptures by a good-natured desire to meet the wishes of one who evidently desired to be strongly loved because she herself was much in love. Poor Clarinda—the primal misfortune of your almost enforced union with heartless grossness was not destined to be compensated by the attachment of unsteady genius. Perhaps the second misfortune was even worse to bear than the first—for with Burns she had no refuge from injustice in contempt or hatred. To the end of her long life, though unable to speak with any patience of his marriage, she never ceased to bewail his untimely death, and to glow over the productions of his Muse.

Thenceforth "Sylvander" and "Clarinda" are transformed back into plain Robert Burns and Mrs. M'Lehose, and as such we wonderingly continue what of their correspondence has been preserved.*

On the 9th of March, 1789, Burns wrote from Dumfriesshire in reply to a letter from Mrs. M'Lehose, the following diplomatic epistle:—

TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

ELLISLAND, *March* 9, 1789.

MADAM,—The letter you wrote me to Heron's† carried its own answer in its bosom; you forbade me to write you, unless I was willing to plead guilty to

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*"On returning from Edinburgh (in spring '88), Burns wore a breastpin which he had got from Clarinda. After his marriage, he sent his brother William to Glasgow, with bonny Jean on a horse behind him, where an artist took a miniature of her, which was placed in the pin, with the motto: 'To err is human; to forgive, divine.'"—*Recollection of Mrs. Begg.* This is a bit of prose in our Poet's history, but *too curiously human* to be omitted.

† The letter referred to (of Mrs. M.'s) is missing.

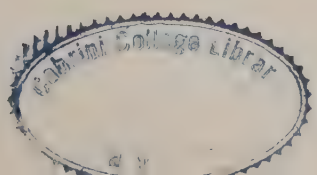
a certain indictment that you were pleased to bring against me. As I am convinced of my own innocence, and, though conscious of high imprudence and egregious folly, can lay my hand upon my breast, and attest the rectitude of my heart, you will pardon me, Madam, if I do not carry my complaisance so far as humbly to acquiesce in the name of "Villain," merely out of compliment to your opinion, much as I esteem your judgment, and warmly as I regard your worth.

I have already told you, and I again aver it, that, at the period of time alluded to, I was not under the smallest mortal tie to Mrs. Burns; nor did I, nor could I then know, all the powerful circumstances that omnipotent necessity was busy laying in wait for me. When you call over the scenes that have passed between us, you will survey the conduct of an honest man struggling successfully with temptations, the most powerful that ever beset humanity, and preserving untainted honor in situations where the austerest virtue would have forgiven a fall; situations that, I will dare to say, not a single individual of all his kind, even with half his sensibility and passion, could have encountered without ruin; and I leave you to guess, Madam, how such a man is likely to digest an accusation of "perfidious treachery."

Was I to blame, Madam, in being the distracted victim of charms which, I affirm, no man ever approached with impunity? Had I seen the least glimmering of hope that these charms could ever have been mine; or even had not iron Necessity—— But these are unavailing words.

I would have called on you when I was in town, indeed I could not not have resisted it, but that Mr. Ainslie told me you were determined to avoid your windows while I was in town, lest even a glance of me should occur in the street.

When I shall have regained your good opinion, per-



haps I may venture to solicit your friendship; but, be that as it may, the first of her sex I ever knew shall always be the object of my warmest good wishes.

R. B.

TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

ELLISLAND, *February*, 1790.

I HAVE indeed been ill, Madam, the whole winter. An incessant headache, depression of spirits, and all the truly miserable consequences of a deranged nervous system, have made dreadful havoc of my health and peace. Add to all this, a line of life into which I have lately entered obliges me to ride, upon an average, at least two hundred miles every week. However, thank Heaven, I am now greatly better in health. . . .

I could not answer your last letter but one. When you in so many words tell a man that you look on his letters with a smile of contempt, in what language, Madam, can he answer you? Though I were conscious that I had acted wrong—and I am conscious I have acted wrong—yet would I not be bullied into repentance.

I cannot, will not, enter into extenuatory circumstances; else I could show you how my precipitate, headlong, unthinking conduct, leagued with a conjuncture of unlucky events to thrust me out of a possibility of keeping the path of rectitude, to curse me by an irreconcilable war between my duty and my nearest wishes, and to damn me with a choice only of different species of error and misconduct.

I dare not trust myself farther with the subject. The following song is one of my latest productions, and I send it you, as I would do any thing else, because it pleases myself:—[" To Mary In Heaven "]—R. B.

Clarinda had now partially recovered from the shock she received when the reports reached her of the poet's irrevocable matrimonial alliance with Jean Armour.

In the spring of 1791 the new poems, "Tam O'Shanter," and the "Elegy on Matthew Henderson," would create some sensation in Edinburgh, and revive the talk about Burns. Mrs. M'Lehose addressed a letter to the poet, which he allowed to lie unanswered till a second communication from her reached him in course of the summer. This last enclosed some verses of her own composition, which Burns refers to in the following reply. We annex what appears to be the little poem sent by Clarinda on this occasion, taken from an interleaved copy of the printed "Correspondence between Burns and Clarinda," published by the lady's grandson in 1843. That interleaved copy belonged to Mr. W. C. M'Lehose, who edited the correspondence, and who died at New York on 2d March 1847.

SYMPATHY.

Assist me, all ye gentle powers
That sweeten Friendship's happy hours,
Whilst I attempt to sing of thee,
Heav'n-born emotion, Sympathy.

When first I saw my rural swain,
The pride of all the tuneful train,
That hour we lov'd—what could it be
But thy sweet magic, Sympathy?

Nor sordid wealth, nor giddy power,
Could e'er confer one happy hour—
One hour like those I've spent with thee,
In love's endearing sympathy!

All hail! the heav'n-inspired mind,
That glows with love of human kind;
'Tis thine to feel the ecstacy—
Soul link'd to soul by Sympathy.

(43) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, LAMOND'S LAND, EDINBURGH.

(CLAR. CORRES., 1843.)

[*Aug.* 1791.]

I HAVE received both your letters, Madam, and ought, and would have answered the first, long ago; but on what subject could I write you? How can

you expect a correspondent should write you, when you declare that you mean to preserve his letters, with a view sooner or later, to expose them on the pillory of derision, and the rack of criticism? This is gagging me completely as to speaking the sentiments of my bosom; else, Madam, I could perhaps too truly

"Join grief with grief, and echo sighs to thine."

I have perused your most beautiful, but most pathetic poem—do not ask me how often, or with what emotions. You know that "I dare to *sin*, but not to *lie!*" Your verses wring the confession from my inmost soul—I will say it, expose it, as you please—that I have more than once in my life, been the victim of a damning conjuncture of circumstances; and that to me you must be ever

"Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes."

I have just, since I had yours, composed the following stanzas. Let me know your opinion of them.

Sensibility, how charming,
Thou my Friend, canst truly tell;
But Distress, with horrors arming,
Thou, alas! hast known too well!

Fairest flower, behold the lily
Blooming in the sunny ray;
Let the blast sweep o'er the valley,
See it prostrate in the clay.

Hear the woodlark charm the forest,
Telling o'er his little joys;
But alas! a prey the surest
To each pirate of the skies.

Dearly bought the hidden treasure
Finer feelings can bestow:
Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

I have one other piece in your taste; but I have just a snatch of time.

LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

A BALLAD.

Now Nature hangs her mantle green
On every blooming tree,
And spreads her sheets of daisies white,
Out o'er the grassy lea.

* * * * * * *

Such, my dearest Nancy, were the words of the amiable but unfortunate Mary. Misfortune seems to take a peculiar pleasure in darting her arrows against "honest men and bonie lasses." Of this you are too, too just a proof; but may your future fate be a bright exception to the remark! In the words of Hamlet,

"Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me."

ROBT. BURNS.

LEADHILLS, *Thursday Noon.*

(21) MRS. M'LEHOSE TO MR. ROBERT BURNS,

ELLISLAND, DUMFRIES, 2ND AUGUST 1791.*

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

EDINBURGH, *2nd August* [1791].

YOU surely mistake me, Sir—"Expose your letters to criticism!" Nothing could be further from my intention: read my letters, and you will find nothing to justify such an idea. But I suppose they are burned, so you can't have recourse to them. In an impassioned hour, I once talked of publishing them, but a little cool reflection showed me its impropriety: the idea has long been abandoned, and I wish you to write me with that confidence you would do to a person of whom you entertained a good opinion, and who is sincerely interested in your welfare. To the "every day children of the

* Holograph in possession of Mr. Paterson, publisher, Edinburgh.

world" I well know, one cannot speak the sentiments of the bosom.

I am pleased with your reception of the Poem, and no less so with your beautiful stanzas in consequence. The last I think peculiarly elegant—

'Dearly bought the hidden treasure," &c.

It has procured me a short visit from the Muse, who has been a stranger since the *Golden Dream* of '88. The verses are inaccurate, but if worth while, pray correct them for me. Here they are,*—

Yes, Sensibility is charming,
Tho' it may wound the tender mind,
Nature's stores, the bosom warming,
Yield us pleasures most refined.

See yonder pair of warbling linnets,
How their music charms the grove;
What else with rapture fills their minutes,
But Sensibility and Love?

Ev'n should the sportsmen (cruel rovers!)
Rob them of their tuneful breath,
How blest the little life-long lovers,
Undivided in their death!

A long-loved maid nipt in the blossom,
May lie in yonder kirk-yard green;
Yet Mem'ry soothes her lover's bosom,
Recalling many a raptured scene.

Or, musing by the rolling ocean,
See him sit, with visage wan,
As wave succeeding wave in motion,
Mourns the chequer'd life of Man.

Sensibility! sweet treasure,
Still I'll sing in praise of thee:
All that mortals know of pleasure
Flows from Sensibility.

Let me know what you think of this poor imitation of your style. 'Tis metre, but not Poetry.

Pray have you seen Greenfield's Poems? or Miss Carmichael's? The last are very poor I think.

I have been reading Beattie's Minstrel for the first time. What a delicious treat!

Interrupted—Adieu!

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* We have abridged Clarinda's little sentimental poem, but the omitted stanzas are in quality considerably inferior to those here presented.

MRS. M'LEHOSE TO ROBERT BURNS.

[*November*, 1791.]

SIR,—I take the liberty of addressing a few lines in behalf of your old acquaintance, Jenny Clow,* who to all appearance, is at this moment dying. Obliged, from all the symptoms of a rapid decay, to quit her service, she is gone to a room almost without common necessaries, untended and unmourned. In circumstances so distressing, to whom can she so naturally look for aid as to the father of her child, the man for whose sake she has suffered many a sad and anxious night, shut from the world, with no other companions than guilt and solitude? You have now an opportunity to evince you indeed possess these fine feelings you have delineated, so as to claim the just admiration of your country. I am convinced I need add nothing farther to persuade you to act as every consideration of humanity as well as gratitude must dictate. I am, Sir, your sincere well-wisher, A. M.

(44) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

DUMFRIES, 23*rd November*, 1791.

IT is extremely difficult, my dear Madam, for me to deny a lady anything; but to a lady whom I regard with all the endearing epithets of respectful esteem and old friendship, how shall I find the language of refusal? I have, indeed, a shade of the lady, which I keep, and shall ever keep in the *sanctum sanctorum* of my most anxious care. That lady, though an unfortunate and irresistible conjuncture of circumstances has lost me her esteem, yet she shall be ever, to me

"Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart."

I am rather anxious for her sake, as to her voyage. I pray God my fears may be groundless. By the way,

* 'Tis matter for wonder that Chambers or some of the other local editors have not tried to give some information concerning Jenny Clow.—G. G.

I have this moment a letter from her, with a paragraph or two conceived in so stately a style, that I would not pardon it in any created being except herself; but, as the subject interests me much, I shall answer it to you, as I do not know her present address. I am sure she must have told you of a girl, a Jenny Clow, who had the misfortune to make me a father, with contrition I own it, contrary to the laws of our most excellent constitution, in our holy Presbyterian hierarchy.

Mrs. M—— tells me a tale of the poor girl's distress that makes my very heart weep blood. I will trust that your goodness will apologize to your delicacy for me, when I beg of you, for Heaven's sake, to send a porter to the poor woman—Mrs. M., it seems, knows where she is to be found—with five shillings in my name; and, as I shall be in Edinburgh on Tuesday first, for certain, make the poor wench leave a line for me, before Tuesday, at Mr. Mackay's, White Hart Inn, Grassmarket, where I shall put up; and, before I am two hours in town, I shall see the poor girl, and try what is to be done for her relief. I would have taken my boy from her long ago, but she would never consent.

I shall do myself the very great pleasure to call for you when I come to town, and repay you the sum your goodness shall have advanced. * * * * * and most obedient,

ROBERT BURNS.

[So Burns within ten days from this date visited Edinburgh and although we have no news of what he did for Jenny Clow, nor of what became of the poor woman, we have left for record the most brilliant galaxy of poetry and song celebrating this meeting with Clarinda, that is to be found in the literature of the world.]—G. G.

Burns, on reaching Edinburgh, was reconciled to Clarinda. Clarinda (as Chambers explains), "was now approaching a

critical passage of her own history. She had resolved, though with much hesitation, to accept an invitation from her heartless husband, and join him in Jamaica. A parting interview took place between her and Burns.

[The date given by Burns (and this date was observed by Clarinda for more than forty years afterwards as a red letter day) was the 6th of December, 1791. Who can tell it so well as Burns himself?]—G. G.

THE DEAREST O' THE QUORUM.

O May, thy morn was ne'er sae sweet
As the mirk night o' December!
For sparkling was the rosy wine,
And private was the chamber:
And dear was she I dare na name,
But I will ay remember:
And dear was she I dare na name,
But I will ay remember.

And here's to them that, like oursel,
Can push about the jorum!
And here's to them that wish us weel,
May a' that's gude watch o'er em!
And here's to them, we dare na tell,
The dearest o' the quorum!
And here's to them, we dare na tell,
The dearest o' the quorum.

The departure of Clarinda was fixed for early in January, but she did not leave till February following. Meanwhile Burns had Clarinda much on his mind.

TO MRS. M'LEHOSE, EDINBURGH.

DUMFRIES, [15*th December*, 1791.]

I HAVE some merit, my ever dearest of women, in attracting and securing the heart of Clarinda. In her I met with the most accomplished of all womankind, the first of all God's works; and yet I, even I, had the good fortune to appear amiable in her sight.

By the by, this is the sixth letter that I have written you since I left you; and if you were an ordinary being, as you are a creature very extraordinary—an instance of what God Almighty in the plen-

itude of his power, and the fulness of his goodness, can make !—I would never forgive you for not answering my letters.

I have sent in your hair, a part of the parcel you gave me, with a measure, to Mr. Bruce the jeweller in Prince's Street, to get a ring done for me. I have likewise sent in the verses On Sensibility altered to

> "Sensibility how charming,
> Dearest Nancy, thou canst tell," &c.

to the Editor of the Scots Songs, of which you have three volumes, to set to a most beautiful air ; out of compliment to the first of women, my ever-beloved, my ever-sacred Clarinda. I shall probably write you to-morrow. In the meantime, from a man who is literally drunk, accept and forgive ! R. B.

(66) TO MRS. M'LEHOSE.

DUMFRIES, *27th December, 1791.*

I HAVE yours, my ever dearest Madam, this moment. I have just ten minutes before the post goes ; and these I shall employ in sending you some songs I have just been composing to different tunes, for the Collection of Songs, of which you have three volumes, and of which you shall have the fourth.

SONG.

TUNE—*Rory Dall's Port.*

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever ;
Ae fareweel, and then for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerful twinkle lights me ;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her, was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly!
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love, and Pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.*

SONG.

To an old Scots Tune.

Behold the hour, the boat, arrive!
My dearest Nancy, O fareweel!
Sever'd frae thee, can I survive,
Frae thee whom I hae loved sae weel?

Endless and deep shall be my grief;
Nae ray o' comfort shall I see;
But this most precious, dear belief!
That thou wilt still remember me.

Alang the solitary shore,
Where fleeting sea-fowl round me cry,
Across the rolling, dashing roar,
I'll westward turn my wistful eye:

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* The fourth stanza Byron put at the head of his poem of the Bride of Abydos. Scott has remarked that it is worth a thousand romances; and Mrs. Jameson has elegantly said, that not only are these lines what Scott says, "But in *themselves* a complete romance. They are," she adds, "the *alpha* and *omega* of feeling, and contain the essence of an existence of pain and pleasure, distilled into one burning drop."—*Chambers.*

Happy, thou Indian grove, I'll say,
Where now my Nancy's path shall be!
While thro' your sweets she holds her way,
O tell me, does she muse on me!!!

SONG.

To a charming plaintive Scots air.

Ance mair I hail thee, thou gloomy December!
Ance mair I hail thee wi' sorrow and care:
Sad was the parting thou mak'st me remember,
Parting wi' Nancy, oh, ne'er to meet mair!

Fond lovers' parting is sweet, painful pleasure,
Hope beaming mild on the soft parting hour;
But the dire feeling, oh, farewell for ever!
Anguish unmingled and agony pure!

The rest of this song is on the wheels.

Adieu. Adieu.

R. B.

The poet afterwards added the following verses:—

Wild as the winter now tearing the forest,
Till the last leaf o' the summer is flown,
Such is the tempest has shaken my bosom,
Since my last hope and last comfort is gone!

Still as I hail thee, thou gloomy December,
Still shall I hail thee wi' sorrow and care;
For sad was the parting thou mak'st me remember,
Parting wi' Nancy, oh, ne'er to meet mair!

MRS. M'LEHOSE TO MR. ROBERT BURNS.

25th January, 1792.

AGITATED, hurried to death, I sit down to write a few lines to you, my ever dear, dear friend! We are ordered aboard on Saturday,—to sail on Sunday. And now, my dearest Sir, I have a few things to say to you, as the last advice of her who could have lived or died with you! I am happy to know of

your applying so steadily to the business you have engaged in; but, oh remember, this life is a short, passing scene! Seek God's favor,—keep His Commandments,—be solicitous to prepare for a happy eternity! There, I trust, we will meet, in perfect and never-ending bliss. Read my former letters attentively: let the religious tenets there expressed sink deep into your mind; meditate on them with candor, and your accurate judgment must be convinced that they accord with the words of Eternal Truth! Laugh no more at holy things, or holy men: remember, "Without holiness no man shall see God." Another thing, and I have done: as you value my peace, do not write me to Jamaica, until I let you know you may with safety. Write Mary often. She feels for you! and judges of your present feelings by her own. I am sure you will be happy to hear of my happiness: and I trust you will —soon. If there is time, you may drop me a line ere I go, to inform me if you get this, and another letter I wrote you dated the 21st, which I am afraid of having been neglected to be put into the office.

So it was the Roselle you were to have gone in! I read your letter to-day, and reflected deeply on the ways of Heaven! To us they oft appear dark and doubtful; but let us do our duty faithfully, and sooner or later we will have our reward, because "the Lord God Omnipotent reigns:" every upright mind has here cause to rejoice. And now, adieu. May Almighty God bless you and yours! take you into His blessed favor here, and afterwards receive you into His glory!

Farewell. I will ever, ever remain

Your *real* friend,

A. M.

Burns' thoughts often reverted to his fair friend and Edinburgh society. In February, 1792, Mrs. M'Lehose sailed for Jamaica, about two months after the Poet's final interview with her. In the course of the ensuing summer, he bewailed her absence in the following pastoral:—

MY NANNIE'S AWA.

TUNE—*There'll never be peace, &c.*

I.

Now in her green mantle blithe Nature arrays,
And listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
But to me it's delightless—my Nannie's awa'.

II.

The snaw-drap and primrose our woodlands adorn,
And violets bathe in the weet o' the morn;
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
They mind me o' Nannie—and Nannie's awa'.

III.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the gray-breaking dawn;
And thou mellow mavis that hails the night fa',
Give over for pity—my Nannie's awa'.

IV.

Come autumn, sae pensive, in yellow and gray,
And soothe me with tidings o' Nature's decay:
The dark dreary winter and wild driving snaw
Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa'!

[The venture of giving her husband "another chance," was not in the least satisfactory. So "Clarinda" returned almost immediately to Edinburgh, being absent about nine months.]

TO MRS. M'LEHOSE.

[*March* 1793.]

I SUPPOSE, my dear Madam, that by your neglecting to inform me of your arrival in Europe,—a circumstance that could not be indifferent to me, as, indeed, no occurrence relating to you can,—you meant to leave me to guess and gather that a correspondence I once had the honor and felicity to enjoy, is to be no more. Alas! what heavy-laden sounds are these —"No more!" The wretch who has never tasted pleasure, has never known wo; what drives the soul to madness, is the recollection of joys that are "no more!" But this is not language to the world: they do not understand it. But come, ye few,—the children of Feeling and Sentiment!—ye whose trembling bosom-chords ache to unutterable anguish, as recollection gushes on the heart!—ye who are capable of an attachment, keen as the arrow of Death, and strong as the vigor of immortal being,—come! and your ears

shall drink a tale——But, hush! I must not, can not tell it; agony is in the recollection, and frenzy in the recital!

But Madam,—to leave the paths that lead to madness,—I congratulate your friends on your return; and I hope that the precious health, which Miss P. tells me is so much injured, is restored, or restoring. There is a fatality attends Miss Peacock's correspondence and mine. Two of my letters, it seems, she never received; and her last came while I was in Ayrshire, was unfortunately mislaid, and only found about ten days or a fortnight ago, on removing a desk of drawers.

I present you a book: may I hope you will accept of it. I daresay you will have brought your books with you. The fourth volume of the Scots Songs is published; I will presume to send it you. Shall I hear from you? But first hear me. No cold language —no prudential documents: I despise advice, and scorn control. If you are not to write such language, such sentiments as you know I shall wish, shall delight to receive, I conjure you, by wounded pride! by ruined peace! by frantic, disappointed passion! by all the many ills that constitute that sum of human woes, a broken heart!!!—to me be silent for ever. If ever you insult me with the unfeeling apophthegms of cold-blooded caution, may all the——but hold, a fiend could not breathe a malevolent wish on the head of an angel! Mind my request—If you send a page baptised in the font of sanctimonious prudence, by heaven, earth, and hell, I will tear it to atoms. Adieu. May all good things attend you. R. B.

[1793.]

BEFORE you ask me why I have not written you, first let me be informed by you, *how* I shall write you? "In friendship," you say; and I have many a time taken up my pen to try an epistle of "friendship" to you, but it will not do: 'tis like Jove grasping a pop-gun, after having wielded his thunder. When I take up the pen, recollection ruins me. Ah! my ever dearest Clarinda! Clarinda! What a host of memory's tenderest offspring crowd on my fancy at that sound! But I must not indulge that subject.—You have forbid it.

I am extremely happy to learn that your precious health is reëstablished, and that you are once more fit to enjoy that satisfaction in existence, which health alone can give us. My old friend Ainslie has indeed been kind to you. Tell him that I envy him the power of serving you. I had a letter from him a while ago, but it was so dry, so distant, so like a card to one of his clients, that I could scarce bear to read it, and have not yet answered it. He is a good honest fellow, and *can* write a friendly letter, which would do equal honor to his head and his heart, as a whole sheaf of his letters which I have by me will witness; and though Fame does not blow her trumpet at my approach *now*, as she did *then*, when he first honored me with his friendship, yet I am as proud as ever; and when I am laid in my grave, I wish to be stretched at my full length, that I may occupy every inch of ground I have a right to.

You would laugh were you to see me where I am just now. Would to Heaven you were here to laugh with me, though I am afraid that crying would be our first employment. Here am I set, a solitary hermit, in the solitary room of a solitary inn, with a solitary bottle of wine by me, as grave and as stupid as an

owl, but like that owl, still faithful to my old song; in confirmation of which, my dear Mrs. Mac, here is your good health. May the hand-waled benisons o' Heaven bless your bonnie face; and the wretch wha skellies at your welfare, may the auld tinkler deil get him to clout his rotten heart! Amen.

You must know, my dearest Madam, that these now many years, wherever I am, in whatever company, when a married lady is called as a toast, I constantly give you; but, as your name has never passed my lips, even to my most intimate friend, I give you by the name of Mrs. Mac. This is so well known among my acquaintances, that when any married lady is called for, the toast-master will say—"Oh, we need not ask him who it is: here's Mrs. Mac!" I have also, among my convivial friends, set on foot a round of toasts, which I call a round of Arcadian Shepherdesses; that is a round of favorite ladies, under female names celebrated in ancient song; and then you are my Clarinda. So, my lovely Clarinda, I devote this glass of wine to a most ardent wish for your happiness.

In vain would Prudence, with decorous sneer,
Point out a censuring world, and bid me fear:
Above that world on wings of love I rise,
I know its worst, and can that worst despise.

"Wrong'd, injured, shunned, unpitied, unredrest;
The mock'd quotation of the scorner's jest"—
Let Prudence' direst bodements on me fall,
Clarinda, rich reward! o'erpays them all.

I have been rhyming a little of late, but I do not know if they are worth postage.

Tell me what you think of the following monody.

* * * * * *

The subject of the foregoing is a woman of fashion in this country, with whom at one period I was well acquainted. By some scandalous conduct to me, and

two or three other gentlemen here as well as me, she steered so far to the north of my good opinion, that I have made her the theme of several ill-natured things. The following epigram * struck me the other day as I passed her carriage.

* * * * * *

R. B.

*[The Monody, Epitaph, and Epigram, on Mrs. Riddell, and which Burns lived to regret having written, are printed in his Works.]

This is the last letter found. Two years after this Burns died.

[The first tribute thrown on the Cairn of Burns, which has since risen to mountain height, was by Maria Riddell, August 6, 1796. It will be found at appropriate place in Vol. VI.—G. G.]

Though Mrs. M'Lehose survived Burns the long period of forty-five years, there are few or no incidents of any general interest in her after-life. Her best friend and benefactor, Lord Craig, died in 1813; and it was her fate not only to survive most of the friends of her middle life, but to see all her son's family, except one grandson, pass away before her to the grave. Her son himself died suddenly in April 1839, having been predeceased by his wife and two children. After this event, Mrs. M'Lehose's memory, which had begun to decline several years before, failed very much. Her other mental faculties were not so much affected, and her health and strength continued good,—so much so, that she was able to enjoy, till shortly before her death, her favorite walk round the Calton Hill. A lady, (widow of the late Commissary-general Moodie, of Van Diemen's Land,) who, with her sister, made the acquaintance of Mrs. M'Lehose at a very late period of her life, and both of whom paid her much kind attention, has favored the editor with some observations from her Journal, from which the following extracts are made :—

"*Edinburgh*, 10*th March*, 1841.—I have been interested by nothing more in this Queen of Cities, with its 'palaces and towers,' than by poor Burns's Monument. It is pleasant, in

the land of his nativity, to find the bard of nature, and of all time, in full possession of that 'posthumous fame' which it was his delight to contemplate in life, and to which he was confident his genius would entitle him. An accidental circumstance, improved by my *curiosity*, (which I beg leave to dignify by denominating *literary*,) has brought me acquainted with one who was the friend and correspondent of the poet. This is the celebrated 'Clarinda,' who still lives, at the advanced age of eighty-two, near the Calton Hill. I have had many opportunities of conversing with her. Her memory is greatly impaired; and being also a little deaf, and seldom now quitting her house, common occurrences have ceased to interest her: even the affairs of the Kirk,* which at present agitate and divide all Scotland from John o'Groat's to the Border, make no impression on her mind. But it is satisfactory to observe how much remains in that mind to cheer the hours of solitude, and to give consolation to the close of a life prolonged beyond the common lot.

"*30th March*, 1841.—Owing to sickness in my family I did not see Mrs. M'Lehose for a short time. When I called, I found this interesting old lady much altered in appearance, though not in spirits. She lives in great simplicity, and is very sensible of the great blessing of health.

"*June*, 1841.—I still see her with interest; for, although her memory is much weakened by time, and the severe shock she suffered about two years ago in the sudden death of her son, yet her state is far from that of second childhood. She is perfectly conscious that her intellectual powers are much abridged. She remarked upon the loss of her memory,—'It was the strongest organ I possessed: therefore, having been so much exercised, it is no wonder it has taken leave the first.'

"Although her memory is gone as to daily occurrences, yet her recollection is extraordinary as to past events, particularly in reciting anecdotes in verse in order to illustrate the conversation,—the subject of which she never misapprehends, whether lively or serious. Indeed, her mind is still the receptacle of fine thoughts,—and in conversation with *one* person, she is always ready, and never misapplies a quotation when the subject requires one. When there are many in the room, she becomes confused, and seems to take no part in the conversation; by reason, I think, of her deafness, more than any defect of understanding. Her piety is beautifully illustrated in her al-

* This was the controversy which eventuated in 1843 in the disruption and secession of the Free Church.

lusions to the Scriptures; and her memory is tenacious in reciting the Paraphrases. Speaking of old age, she observed 'on the loss each year sustains,' but she immediately added, as if recollecting that injustice might thereby be imputed to the Almighty,—

> He gives, and when He takes away
> He takes but what He gave.

She also quoted the tenth verse of the ninetieth Psalm, with great accuracy and emphasis. Even her conversation on religious subjects has been so entirely from the heart, that we have always enjoyed the subjects that led that way. She often expresses her thankfulness for the faithful attendance of her excellent servant, who is devoted to 'the mistress,' to whom she is now indebted for all her earthly comfort, and who is consequently much beloved and trusted by her."

"*22d October*, 1841.—Our old friend, Mrs. M'Lehose, died this morning. She is gone, and I fully believe to her rest: for she was humble, and relied for acceptance upon the atonement. It has been a source of satisfaction to us to witness the composure of the last days of 'Clarinda.' To some who saw this old lady latterly, the apathy of age, and the loss of memory, gave the idea of greater feebleness of mind than was really the case. There were intervals in which she was still capable of a degree of mental exercise; and corresponding sentiments often served to elicit something of that mental activity for which she had been remarkable. We have frequently found her very collected and clear upon subjects which interested her. I had the blessing of prayer with her frequently; and on the day of her death I prayed by her bedside, but she could not join: she only pressed my hand, and said, 'I am much obliged to you.' She went off peacefully. Amongst her last words were, 'I go to Jesus.' When her faithful servant said to her, 'Do you fear death?' she answered, 'Not so much now.' After a short time she felt very cold, and, pressing her servant's hands, exclaimed, 'Margaret! Margaret*!' and expired."

Of Mrs. M'Lehose's appearance in early life, it has been recorded that she was considered one of the beauties of Glasgow. She was short in stature; her hands and feet small and delicate; her skin fair, with a ruddy color in her cheeks, which she retained to the end of her life; her eyes were lively, and evinced great vivacity; her teeth well formed, and beautifully

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* Margaret Gray her faithful servant.—G. G.

Catharine

(AT 80 YEARS OF AGE.)

FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING IN THE POSSESSION OF ROBERT CLARKE, CINCINNATI.

white; her voice was soft and pleasing. Mrs. M'Lehose's perceptive talents were not so good as her powers of reflection. Her judgment was often misled by her imagination, or biassed by the keenness of her feelings; but she read much; and having an excellent memory, and exercising sound reflection, she made the knowledge thus acquired her own. Her observation on the world around her was constant and acute, and she formed a true appreciation of her own position. But her sensitiveness was too great; her natural vivacity was strong, and when she gave full play to it in society, next day's reflection made her construe slight deviations, on her own part especially, and sometimes in others, into grave offences, for which she felt undue regret. She was very fond of society, and took a lead in it from her vivacity and ready wit; but when there were many strangers, she kept in the background. It seemed to require the fostering encouragement of those who had already shown an appreciation of her conversational powers to excite her to the exercise of them.

As a mother, she was fond and indulgent; and the only son who was spared to her, was the object of her warmest affections and most tender solicitude. Nor did her attachment to her friends cease with their lives. She cherished their memory when gone, and, in several instances, pays a tribute to their virtues, or the recollection of former happy meetings, in her Journal, many years afterwards. As an example, her notices of Burns may be quoted:—

"*25th Jan.*, 1815.—Burns's birth-day.—A great dinner at Oman's. Should like to be there, an invisible spectator of all said of that great genius."

"*6th Dec.*, 1831.—This day I never can forget. Parted with Burns in the year 1791, never more to meet in this world.—Oh, may we meet in Heaven!"

Robert Chambers records in his autobiography that he frequently met Clarinda from 1820 to 1840, and despite her addiction to the use of snuff, which was one of the common customs of the times, he found her a very intelligent and interesting old lady, and always glad to talk of Burns and Auld Lang Syne.

We are indebted to Mr. Robert Clarke, of Cincinnati, for the privilege of copying the miniature portrait which we engrave. It represents Clarinda at the age of 80.

[Before closing the Clarinda Correspondence, this will be the proper place to record what occurred after the death of Burns, and we therefore make extracts from two letters of Mrs. M'Lehose to Mr. Syme, who collected materials for Dr. Currie when he was preparing his edition of Burns's works. They admirably illustrate the sprightly character of Clarinda, and contain some interesting observations respecting the immortal bard. These letters explain that Clarinda obtained control of all the correspondence, and what we have been able to publish is only what she permitted.—G. G.]

MRS. M'LEHOSE TO MR. JOHN SYME.

[*December*, 1796.]

"What can have impressed such an idea upon you, as that I ever conceived the most distant intention to destroy these precious memorials of an acquaintance, the recollection of which would influence me were I to live till fourscore! Be assured I will never suffer one of them to perish. This I give you my solemn word of honor upon ;—nay, more, on condition that you send me my letters, I will select such passages from our dear bard's letters as will do honor to his memory, and cannot hurt my own fame, even with the most rigid. His letters, however, are really not literary ; they are the passionate effusions of an elegant mind—indeed, too tender to be exposed to any but the eye of a partial friend. Were the world composed of minds such as yours, it would be cruel even to bury them : but ah! how very few would understand, much less relish, such compositions! The bulk of mankind are strangers to the delicate refinements of superior minds."

MRS. M'LEHOSE TO MR. JOHN SYME.

EDINBURGH, *9th January*, 1797.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for the speedy return you made to my last letter. What could induce you to spend New Year's Day in so solitary a manner? Had I not heard *other things* of you, I should have imagined you in the predicament of Hamlet, when he exclaims, 'Man delights not me, nor woman neither.' I have a presentiment some *melancholy* recollection has been the cause of your secluding

yourself from the world on a day when all ranks are devoted to festivity. When I first came to Edinburgh it was to me the dullest day in the year, because I had been accustomed to spend it in the society of several of the 'Charities,' as Milton styles them, who were no more. But, for several years past, I have acquired friends, with whom I pass it cheerfully, though death has deprived me of all near relations except Lord Craig, (my first cousin,) and a son, who is the pride and pleasure of my life. I thought a lady's letter, on a subject so near her heart, ought to have been answered—even had half an hour been stolen from your sleep, and therefore rallied you by a quotation from Lord Littleton's poem on Lucy pleading want of time: for the truth is, you were at a loss what to say; you wished not to return the letters, and hardly knew how to use the language of denial—is not this a just statement?

> 'For when a lady's in the case
> You know all other things give place.'

Seriously I can easily conceive you must be excessively hurried: twenty letters in a day—and dry uninteresting stuff! Had I them to write, they should be *favorites* indeed to whom I would add *one* to the *score*. I had no right to expect you to 'epistolize' to me, far less to be a regular correspondent. Your neglect of Mrs. Riddell is amazing, because she is, in my estimation, the first female writer I ever saw; and, I am convinced, a good soul as ever was, from her uncommon attention to our dear Burns and his family. Besides, I suppose, she is an OLD FRIEND of yours. I am delighted with her letters, and reckon her correspondence a great acquisition. She sent me Mr. Roscoe's Monody on Burns. She tells me 'tis he and Dr. Currie are to be his editors. I am happy you have consented to return my letters at last, and that my pledge has pleased you. Please direct them, put up in a parcel, for my usual address, and send them by the Dumfries carrier, who comes here once a-week. You must pardon me for refusing to send B.'s. I never will. I am determined not to allow them to be out of my house; but it will be quite the same to you, as you shall see them all when you come to Edinburgh next month. Do write me previous to your arrival, and name the day, that I may be at home and guard against our being interrupted in perusing these dear memorials of our lamented friend. I hold them sacred—too sacred for the public eye; and I am sure you will agree they are so when you see them. If any argument could have prevailed on me, (and Mrs. Riddell

exhausted all her eloquence could dictate,) the idea of their affording pecuniary assistance was most likely. But I am convinced they would have added little to this effect: for I heard, by a literary conversation here, that it was thought by most people there would be too much intended to be published; and that letters especially it was nonsense to give, as few would be interested in them. This I thought strange, and so will a few enthusiastic admirers of our bard; but I fear 'tis the general voice of the public. I earnestly hope the MSS. may turn out as valuable as you suppose them. It rejoices me to hear so large a sum is to come from other places—and join you in reprobating Caledonia's capital for her shabby donation. But there are few souls *anywhere* who understood or could enter into the relish of such a character as B.'s. There was an electricity about him which could only touch or pervade a *few* cast in nature's finest mould. I fear I have been inaccurate, for I am hurried at present. You always shine when mounted on pigmies. I know not whether you may have reached the top of Parnassus; but you have certainly gathered some sweet flowers by the way.

"Yours with regard,

"CLARINDA."

[Mr. Syme and Mr. Currie could not publish the Clarinda Correspondence at this time—and when later editors of Burns desired the privilege of publishing them, they were refused; and it was not till 1843 that it was given to the public in full, —her grandson, W. C. M'Lehose, acting as editor. Her editor thus refers to an unauthorised edition of a portion of the letters which appeared early in the present century:]

Among others, Allan Cunningham, in the year 1834, when publishing his edition of the Life and Works of the Poet, made an unsuccessful application. Mrs. M'Lehose, in a letter dated 16th July 1834, declined Mr. Cunningham's request, and gave the following account of the original surreptitious appearance of a portion of the letters of Burns:—

"Mrs. James Gray, formerly Miss Peacock, and Mr. Grahame, the author of 'The Sabbath,' (two of my most valued and lamented friends,) applied to me on behalf of a literary gentleman of the name of Finlay, who was then engaged in writing a Life of the Poet, for permission to make *a few extracts* from the Letters to enrich his Life. This was unfortunately granted;

and the Letters lent to Mr. Finlay by Mr. Grahame, under this express condition, that a few extracts inserted in the Life was the sole permission granted to him. Besides making this use of the Letters, Mr. Finlay gave permission to a bookseller to publish all the Letters which had been intrusted to him, and added, most falsely, in an advertisement prefixed to them, that this was done with my permission, ('condescension,' as he termed it,) and that the editor was vested with the sole power to publish these Letters. Nothing could be more contrary to truth."

Allan Cunningham, when preparing the last volumes of his edition, wrote Mrs. M'Lehose as follows:—"I am now arranging the materials for the remaining two volumes, and feel that I want your aid. Without the Letters of Clarinda, the works of Burns will be incomplete. I wish to publish them at the beginning of the eighth volume, with a short introduction, in which their scope and aim will be characterized. You will oblige me and delight your country by giving permission for this. I will do it with all due tenderness. I have a high respect for your character and talents, and wish you to reflect, that the world will in time have full command over the Letters, and that ruder hands than mine will likely deal with them: my wish is for an opportunity to give an accredited edition of the Correspondence to the public, and give a right notion of their object and aim, while I have it so much in my power."

A reviewer, who was intimately acquainted with Clarinda for many years, in noticing Allan Cunningham's edition, thus writes:—"It is to be regretted that the letters to Clarinda are not embraced in this collection; but Mr. Cunningham's explanation on this subject is quite satisfactory. We agree with him, that the letters in question are particularly valuable; and cannot but think that it is from some misapprehension, Clarinda has declined to sanction their publication. We are certain that they could have no such tendency as is feared; the justness of which opinion, we are sure, will at once be acknowledged by all who have the pleasure of knowing the estimable lady to whom they were addressed."

[We may venture the statement of belief that the present edition is all that the public will ever see, so far as completeness goes, of the celebrated Clarinda Correspondence.—G. G.]

"Many a true word is spoken in jest," says the proverb, and Burns in a jesting mood came near, very near, the truth when he wrote to Clarinda as follows,—

January 24, 1788.

* * * * * * *

"NATURE, who has a good deal to say with FORTUNE, had given the coquettish goddess some such hint as—

"Here is a paragon of female excellence, whose equal in all my former compositions, I never was lucky enough to hit on, and despair of ever doing so again: YOU have cast her rather in the shades of life. There is a certain poet of MY making; among YOUR frolics, it would not be amiss to attach him to this masterpiece of my hand, to give her that immortality among mankind, which no woman of any age ever more deserved, and which few rhymsters of this age are better able to confer." * * * *

Burns, in the above jesting sentence, proved himself, verily, a prophet inspired!—G. G.

[Besides the songs which we have included in the foregoing Clarinda Correspondence, as undoubtedly due to her inspiration, there are three others, viz.: "My native land sae far awa," "Wandering Willie," and "Thine am I, my faithful fair," which have formed subject for dispute by several of the editors of Burns, as to their relation to Clarinda. We have contented ourselves by placing them at the end of the Clarinda Correspondence, with the expressed belief that Burns had Clarinda in his mind when he wrote them—in fact, that she is the heroine of all the three songs.—G. G.]

MY NATIVE LAND SAE FAR AWA.

(*Written in 1792.*)

O SAD and heavy, should I part,
But for her sake, sae far awa;
Unknowing what my way may thwart,
My native land sae far awa.

Thou that of a' things Maker art,
That formed this Fair sae far awa,
Gie body strength, then I'll ne'er start,
At this my way sae far awa.

How true is love to pure desert!
Like mine for her sae far awa;
And nocht shall heal my bosom's smart,
While, oh, she is sae far awa!

Nane other love, nane other dart,
I feel but her's sae far awa;
But fairer never touch'd a heart
Than her's, the Fair, sae far awa.

WANDERING WILLIE.

(*Written in 1793.*)

HERE awa, there awa, wandering Willie,
Here awa, there awa, haud awa hame;
Come to my bosom, my ain only dearie,
Tell me thou bring'st me my Willie the same.
Winter winds blew loud and cauld at our parting,
Fears for my Willie brought tears to my e'e,
Welcome now Simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The Simmer to Nature, my Willie to me.

Rest, ye wild storms, in the cave of your slumbers,
How your dread howling a lover alarms!
Wauken ye breezes, row gently ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ance mair to my arms.
But oh, if he's faithless, and minds na his Nannie,
Flow still between us, thou wide roaring main!
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But, dying, believe that my Willie's my ain.

THINE AM I, MY FAITHFUL FAIR.

(*Written in 1793.*)

THINE am I, my faithful Fair,
Thine, my lovely Nancy;
Ev'ry pulse along my veins,
Ev'ry roving fancy.
To thy bosom lay my heart,
There to throb and languish;
Tho' despair had wrung its core,
That would heal its anguish.

Take away those rosy lips,
Rich with balmy treasure;
Turn away thine eyes of love,
Lest I die with pleasure!
What is life when wanting Love?
Night without a morning:
Love's the cloudless summer sun,
Nature gay adorning.

[END OF CLARINDA CORRESPONDENCE.]

George Thomson Esq.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

BURNS AND GEORGE THOMSON,

SEPTEMBER, 1792, TO JULY, 1796.

THE Correspondence of Burns with George Thomson, apart from its LITERARY and MUSICAL importance, is very interesting because of the controversy which arose after the death of Burns concerning the treatment which Burns received from Thomson, in a commercial sense, and Thomson's excuses for his course. Mr. Douglas, in his edition of the poet's works in 1877, says:

"When our poet had been domiciled in the town of Dumfries about nine months, and shortly after Volume IV. of Johnson's *Musical Museum* had been issued, he received a letter from a stranger to him resident in Edinburgh, soliciting his aid in supplying verses for a select collection of Scottish Melodies proposed to be published in a superior style, with original symphonies and accompaniments by the best continental composers of music. The writer of that letter was Mr. George Thomson, principal clerk in the office of the Trustees for the Encouragement of Art and Manufactures in Scotland, a man about the poet's own age, who had been in that employment, first as junior and thereafter as senior clerk, since the year 1780. He was the son of a messenger-at-arms in that city, who had been at one time a country schoolmaster. The young clerk being blest with a considerable share of leisure time, and having a taste for music, devoted most of his spare hours to its cultivation and practice as an amateur.

"In 1784, Mr. Thomson, at the age of twenty-five, married Miss Katherine Miller, daughter of an army Lieutenant, by whom he had a family of two sons and four daughters; and whatever was his financial condition about the period of Burns's

death, when poverty was made a plea to shelter him from charges of penuriousness in his dealings with the poet and his family, he certainly soon thereafter attained a prosperous worldly position. One of his sons became a Lieutenant Colonel of Engineers, while the other was made an Assistant Commissary-general; and the *Scots Magazine* for July 1814 contains the following notice of one of his daughters:—'Marriage:—At Edinburgh, on June 1st, George Hogarth, Esq., W.S., to Georgina, daughter of George Thomson, Esq., principal Clerk to the Hon. Board of Trustees for Art, Manufactures, &c., in Scotland.' A daughter of that marriage became the wife of Charles Dickens, the celebrated novelist, and the mother of his children. In 1839 Mr. Thomson retired from his Clerkship after 59 years' service; and he survived till February 1851, dying at the patriarchal age of ninety-two—'a remarkable proof,' says Chambers, 'of what a moderate, cheerful mind, not unduly tasked by business, or crushed by care, will do in prolonging life, and thus forming a striking contrast to the hapless Bard of Caledonia.'

"The collection of Burns's letters to Thomson was purchased by Lord Dalhousie at the sale of Thomson's effects in 1852. It is a curious circumstance that one of the most important letters of the series, namely that marked number xix. in Currie's editions of the correspondence, is wanting from the collection. It is the one dated 7th April 1793, which fortunately has found its way into the set of Burns's manuscripts preserved in the British Museum. It is there marked 'E. G. 1050,' and noted as having been purchased at Pickering's sale, 13 Dec. 1854. It is very improbable that Thomson ever sanctioned its abstraction from the series; for, in a letter addressed by him to the late Mr. Nisbet, auctioneer, dated 28th November, 1844, in reply to enquiries made concerning this correspondence, Mr. Thomson thus writes:—'I have to acquaint you that I am possessed of *all* the letters and songs in MS. which our immortal Bard wrote for my Work: they are all nicely laid down by the *artiste* paster of the Register House, and elegantly bound in a folio volume. Tell your friend that I hold the Bard's letters to be above any price, and will not sell them.' It thus appears to be certain that Burns's letter to Thomson now in the British Museum must have been dishonestly appropriated by some person either shortly before or after Thomson's death in February 1851; for it was not in the precious volume when exposed for sale on 17th November 1852 and purchased for Lord Dalhousie. It would be interesting to

learn at what time and from what source the late Mr. Pickering obtained it.

"The MS. of the letters originally sent by Thomson to Burns form no part of the Dalhousie volume. Like the letters of Mrs. Dunlop to the poet, they were obtained from the family after his decease, and perhaps not even Dr. Currie was allowed to see them thereafter. That editor informs his readers that 'the whole of this correspondence (as published in 1800) was arranged for the press by Mr. Thomson, and has been printed with little addition or variation.' In these circumstances, however convenient it may be to peruse the letters of Mr. Thomson along with and in relation to those by Burns, we can never be certain that we read the very words and the identical letters to which Burns replied, or which called forth his observations.

"Very far otherwise, however, will the reader feel when he peruses the Bard's own letters, which are here for the first time printed exactly as they appear in the original manuscripts. To the liberal politeness of the present Lord Dalhousie we are indebted for access to the poet's autographs preserved by him at Brechin Castle; and a visit to the British Museum has enabled us to give entire the letter above referred to as having strayed from its brethren."—*Douglas, Edinburgh edition, 1877.*

(1) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *September*, 1792.

SIR,—For some years past I have, with a friend or two, employed many leisure hours in selecting and collating the most favorite of our national melodies for publication. We have engaged Pleyel, the most agreeable composer living, to put accompaniments to these, and also to compose an instrumental prelude and conclusion to each air, the better to fit them for concerts, both public and private. To render this work perfect, we are desirous to have the poetry improved, wherever it seems unworthy of the music; and that it is so in many instances is allowed by every one conversant with our musical collections. The editors of these seem in general to have depended on the music proving an excuse for the verses; and hence some charming melodies are united to mere nonsense and doggerel, while others are accommodated with rhymes so loose and indelicate as cannot be sung in decent company. To remove this reproach would be an easy task to the author of

"The Cotter's Saturday Night;" and, for the honor of Caledonia, I would fain hope he may be induced to take up the pen. If so, we shall be enabled to present the public with a collection infinitely more interesting than any that has yet appeared, and acceptable to all persons of taste, whether they wish for correct melodies, delicate accompaniments or characteristic verses. We will esteem your poetical assistance a particular favor, besides paying any reasonable price you shall please to demand for it. Profit is quite a secondary consideration with us, and we are resolved to spare neither pains nor expense on the publication. Tell me frankly, then, whether you will devote your leisure to writing twenty or twenty-five songs suited to the particular melodies which I am prepared to send you. A few songs, exceptionable only in some of their verses, I will likewise submit to your consideration; leaving it to you, either to mend these, or make new songs in their stead. It is superfluous to assure you that I have no intention to displace any of the sterling old songs; those only will be removed which appear quite silly or absolutely indecent. Even these shall all be examined by Mr. Burns, and if he is of opinion that any of them are deserving of the music, in such case no divorce shall take place.

Relying on the letter accompanying this, to be forgiven for the liberty I have taken in addressing you, I am, with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

G. THOMSON.

(1) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

DUMFRIES, 16*th September*, 1792.

SIR,—I have just this moment got your letter. As the request you make to me will positively add to my enjoyments in complying with it, I shall enter into your undertaking with all the small portion of abilities I have, strained to their utmost exertion by the impulse of enthusiasm. Only, don't hurry me: "Deil tak' the hindmost" is by no means the *cri de guerre* of my muse. Will you, as I am inferior to none of you in enthusiastic attachment to the poetry and music of old Caledonia, and, since you request it, have cheerfully promised my mite of assistance—will you

let me have a list of your airs, with the first line of the printed verses you intend for them, that I may have an opportunity of suggesting any alteration that may occur to me? You know 'tis in the way of my trade; still leaving you, gentlemen, the undoubted right of publishers, to approve or reject, at your pleasure, for your own publication. Apropos! if you are for English verses, there is, on my part, an end of the matter. Whether in the simplicity of the ballad, or the pathos of the song, I can only hope to please myself in being allowed at least a sprinkling of our native tongue. English verses, particularly the works of Scotsmen, that have merit, are certainly very eligible. "Tweedside;" "Ah! the poor shepherd's mournful fate!" "Ah! Chloris, could I now but sit," &c., you cannot mend; but such insipid stuff as "To Fanny fair could I impart," &c., usually set to "The Mill, Mill O," is a disgrace to the collections in which it has already appeared, and would doubly disgrace a collection that will have the very superior merit of yours. But more of this in the farther prosecution of the business, if I am called on for my strictures and amendments—I say, amendments; for I will not alter except where I myself at least think that I amend.

As to any remuneration, you may think my songs either above or below price; for they shall absolutely be the one or the other. In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, &c., would be downright prostitution of soul! A proof of each of the songs that I compose or amend, I shall receive as a favor. In the rustic phrase of the season, "Gude speed the wark!"

I am, Sir, your very humble servant, R. BURNS.

P.S.—I have some particular reasons for wishing my interference to be known as little as possible.

(2) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 13*th October*, 1792.

DEAR SIR,—I received with much satisfaction your pleasant and obliging letter, and I return my warmest acknowledgments for the enthusiasm with which you have entered into our undertaking. We have now no doubt of being able to produce a collection highly deserving of public attention in all respects.

I agree with you in thinking English verses, that have merit, very eligible, wherever new verses are necessary; because the English becomes every year more and more the language of Scotland; but if you mean that no English verses, except those by Scottish authors, ought to be admitted, I am half inclined to differ from you. I should consider it unpardonable to sacrifice one good song in the Scottish dialect, to make room for English verses; but if we can select a few excellent ones, suited to the unprovided or ill-provided airs, would it not be the very bigotry of literary patriotism to reject such, merely because the authors were born south of the Tweed? Our sweet air, "My Nannie O," which in the collections is joined to the poorest stuff that Allan Ramsay ever wrote, beginning, "While some for pleasure pawn their health," answers so finely to Dr. Percy's beautiful song, "O Nancy, wilt thou go with me," that one would think he wrote it on purpose for the air. However, it is not at all our wish to confine you to English verses; you shall freely be allowed a sprinkling of your native tongue, as you elegantly express it; and moreover, we will patiently wait your own time. One thing only I beg, which is, that however gay and sportive the muse may be, she may always be decent. Let her not write what beauty would blush to speak, nor wound that charming delicacy which forms the most precious dowry of our daughters. I do not conceive the song to be the most proper vehicle for witty and brilliant conceits; simplicity, I believe, should be its prominent feature; but in some of our songs the writers have confounded simplicity with coarseness and vulgarity; although between the one and the other, as Dr. Beattie well observes, there is as great a difference as between a plain suit of clothes and a bundle of rags. The humorous ballad, or pathetic complaint, is best suited to our artless melodies; and more interesting, indeed, in all songs, than the most pointed wit, dazzling descriptions, and flowery fancies.

With these trite observations I send you eleven of the songs,

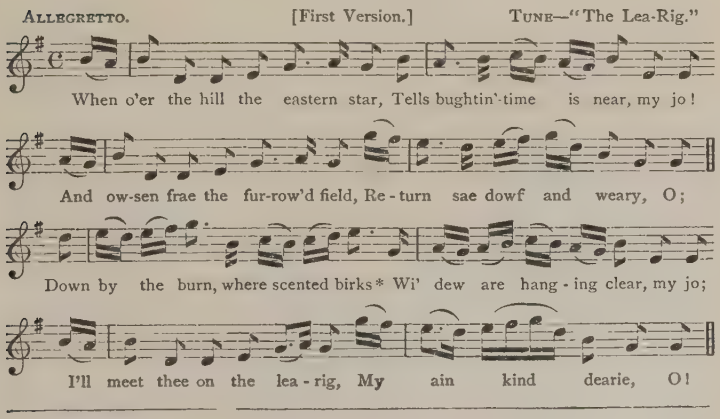
for which it is my wish to substitute others of your writing. I shall soon transmit the rest, and at the same time, a prospectus of the whole collection: and you may believe we will receive any hints that you are so kind as to give for improving the work, with the greatest pleasure and thankfulness.

I remain, dear Sir, &c. G. THOMSON.

(2) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

DUMFRIES, *26th Oct.*, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,—Let me tell you that you are too fastidious in your ideas of songs and ballads. I own that your criticisms are just; the songs you specify in your list have, all but one, the faults you remark in them; but who shall mend the matter? Who shall rise up and say—"Go to, I will make a better?" For instance, on reading over the "Learig," I immediately set about trying my hand on it, and after all, I could make nothing more of it than the following, which, Heaven knows, is poor enough:—

MY AIN KIND DEARIE, O.

ALLEGRETTO.
[First Version.]
TUNE—"The Lea-Rig."
When o'er the hill the eastern star, Tells bughtin'-time is near, my jo!
And ow-sen frae the fur-row'd field, Re-turn sae dowf and weary, O;
Down by the burn, where scented birks* Wi' dew are hang-ing clear, my jo;
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig, My ain kind dearie, O!

* MS. variation:—

"Down by the burn where birken-buds."

In mirkest glen at midnight hour,
I'd rove and ne'er be eerie, O,
If through that glen I gaed to thee,
My ain kind dearie, O.

Although the night were ne'er sae wild,*
And I were ne'er sae wearie, O,
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!†

Your observation, as to the aptitude of Dr. Percy's ballad on the air "Nannie O," is just. It is, besides, perhaps the most beautiful ballad in the English language. But let me remark to you that, in the sentiment and style of our Scottish airs, there is a pastoral simplicity, a something that one may call the Doric style and dialect of vocal music, to which a dash of our native tongue and manners is particularly, nay peculiarly, apposite. For this reason, and, upon my honor, for this reason alone, I am of opinion (but, as I have told you before, my opinion is yours, freely yours, to approve or reject as you please) that my ballad of "Nannie O" might, perhaps, do for one set of verses to the tune. Now don't let it enter into your head that you are under any necessity of taking my verses. I have long ago made up my mind as to my own reputation in the business of authorship; and

* "In the copy transmitted to Mr. Thomson, instead of *wild*, was inserted *wet*. But in one of the manuscripts, probably written afterwards, wet was changed into wild—evidently a great improvement. The lovers might meet on the lea-rig, 'although the night were ne'er so *wild*;' that is, although the summer-wind blew, the sky lowered, and the thunder murmured: such circumstances might render their meeting still more interesting. But if the night were actually wet, why should they meet on the lea-rig? On a wet night the imagination cannot contemplate their situation there with any complacency. Tibullus, and after him Hammond, has conceived a happier situation for lovers on a wet night. Probably Burns had in his mind the verse of an old Scottish Song, in which *wet* and *weary* are naturally enough conjoined:—

'When my ploughman comes hame at e'en
He's often wet and weary;
Cast aff the wet, put on the dry,
And gae to bed, my deary.'"—CURRIE.

† At the suggestion of Mr. Thomson, Burns added another stanza to this song —see page 122, Vol. IV.

have nothing to be pleased or offended at in your adoption or rejection of my verses. Though you should reject one half of what I give you, I shall be pleased with your adopting the other half, and shall continue to serve you with the same assiduity.

In the printed copy of my "Nannie O," the name of the river is horridly prosaic. I will alter it,

"Behind yon hills where Lugar flows."

Girvan is the name of the river that suits the idea of the stanza best, but Lugar* is the most agreeable modulation of syllables.

I will soon give you a great many more remarks on this business; but I have just now an opportunity of conveying you this scrawl free of postage, an expense that it is ill able to pay: so, with my best compliments to honest Allan,† Guid be wi' you, &c.

Remember me to the dearest of my friends, Alex. Cunningham, who, I understand, is a coadjutor with you in this business.

Friday Night.

Saturday Morning.

As I find I have still an hour to spare this morning before my conveyance goes away, I will give you "Nannie O," at length. [See Vol. I. p. 52.]

Your remarks on "Ewe-bughts, Marion," are just: still it has obtained a place among our more classical Scottish songs; and, what with many beauties in its composition, and more prejudices in its favor, you will not find it easy to supplant it.

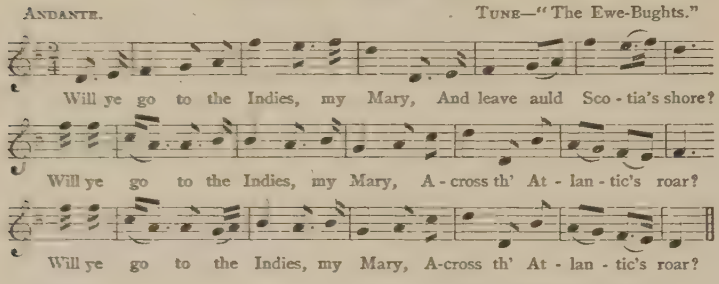
In my very early years, when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the following farewell of a dear girl. It is quite trifling, and has nothing of the merits of "Ewe-bughts;" but it will fill up this page. You must know that all my earlier love-

* Stinchar was the real name—see Common-place Book, *infra*, Vol. V.

† David Allan, the artist, whom Thomson had engaged to furnish drawings for his collection of songs.

songs were the breathings of ardent passion, and though it might have been easy in after-times to have given them a polish, yet that polish to me, whose they were, and who perhaps alone cared for them, would have defaced the legend of my heart, which was so faithfully inscribed on them. Their uncouth simplicity was, as they say of wines, their race.

TO MARY CAMPBELL.*


Andante.
Tune—"The Ewe-Bughts."
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary, And leave auld Sco - tia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary, A - cross th' At - lan - tic's roar?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary, A-cross th' At - lan - tic's roar?

(*See* page 288, Vol. I.)

"Galla Water," and "Auld Rob Morris," I think, will most probably be the next subject of my musings. However, even on my verses, speak out your criticisms with equal frankness. My wish is, not to stand aloft, the uncomplying bigot of *opiniâtreté*, but cordially to join issue with you in the furtherance of the work.

Gude speed the wark. R. B.

(3) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

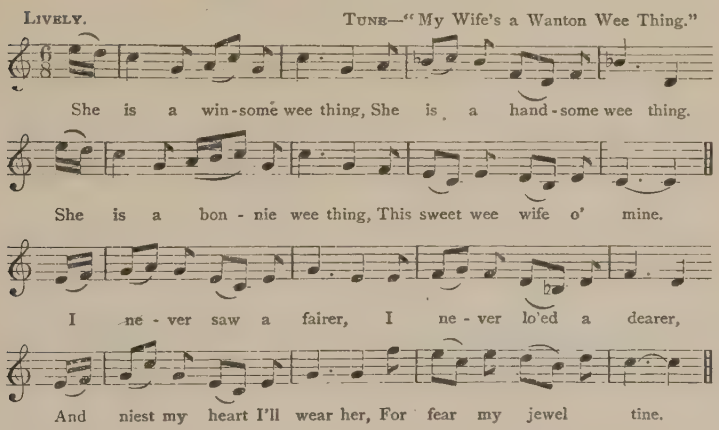
November 8, 1792.

If you mean, my dear Sir, that all the songs in your collection shall be poetry of the first merit, I am afraid you will find more difficulty in the undertaking

* Thomson did not give the above a place in his collection, but wrote on the margin of the letter, "This is a poor song, which I do not mean to include in my collection."

than you are aware of. There is a peculiar rhythmus in many of our airs, and a necessity of adapting syllables to the emphasis, or what I would call the feature-notes of the tune, that cramp the poet, and lay him under almost insuperable difficulties. For instance, in the air, "My wife's a wanton wee thing," if a few lines smooth and pretty can be adapted to it, it is all you can expect. The following were made extempore to it; and though on further study I might give you something more profound, yet it might not suit the light-horse gallop of the air so well as this random clink.

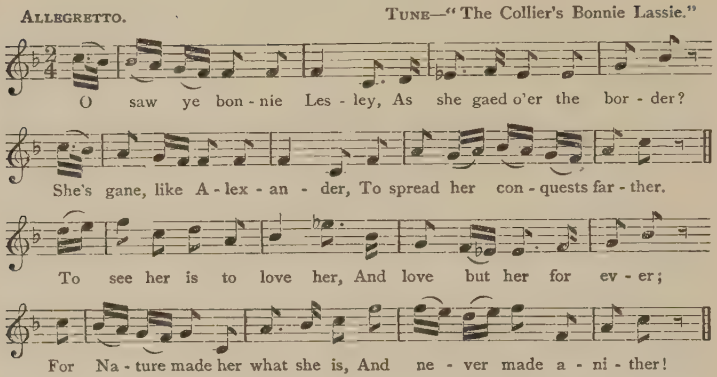
THE WINSOME WEE THING.


Lively.
Tune—"My Wife's a Wanton Wee Thing."
She is a win-some wee thing, She is a hand-some wee thing.
She is a bon-nie wee thing, This sweet wee wife o' mine.
I ne-ver saw a fairer, I ne-ver lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her, For fear my jewel tine.

(*See* page 123, Vol. IV.)

I have just been looking over the "Collier's bonny Dochter;" and if the following rhapsody, which I composed the other day on a charming Ayrshire girl, Miss Lesley Baillie, as she passed through this place to England, will suit your taste better than the "Collier Lassie," fall on and welcome:—

BONNIE LESLEY.


Allegretto.
Tune—"The Collier's Bonnie Lassie."
O saw ye bon - nie Les - ley, As she gaed o'er the bor - der?
She's gane, like A - lex - an - der, To spread her con - quests far - ther.
To see her is to love her, And love but her for ev - er;
For Na - ture made her what she is, And ne - ver made a - ni - ther!

(*See* page 120, Vol. IV.)

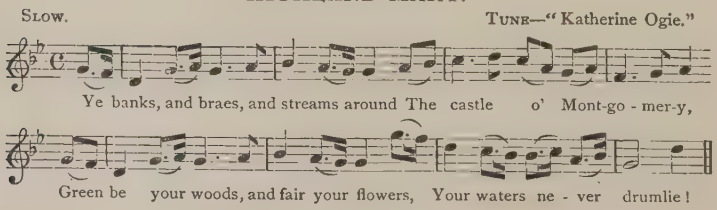
Every seventh line ends with three syllables, in place of the two in the other lines: but you will see in the sixth bar of the second part, the place where these three syllables will always recur, that the four semiquavers usually sung as one syllable will with the greatest propriety divide into two.

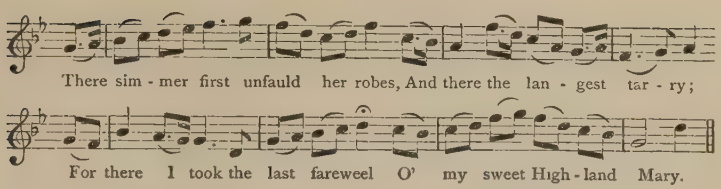
I have hitherto deferred the sublimer, more pathetic airs, until more leisure, as they will take, and deserve, a greater effort. However, they are all put into your hands, as clay into the hands of the potter, to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor. Farewell, &c.

Robt. Burns.

(4) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

HIGHLAND MARY.


Slow.
Tune—"Katherine Ogie."
Ye banks, and braes, and streams around The castle o' Mont-go - mer-y,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers, Your waters ne - ver drumlie!


There sim - mer first unfauld her robes, And there the lan - gest tar - ry;
For there I took the last fareweel O' my sweet High - land Mary.

(*See* page 125, Vol. IV.)

14th Nov., 1792.

My Dear Sir,—I agree with you that the song, "Katherine Ogie," is very poor stuff, and unworthy, altogether unworthy, of so beautiful an air. I tried to mend it, but the awkward sound Ogie occurring so often in the rhyme, spoils every attempt at introducing sentiment into the piece. The foregoing song pleases myself; I think it is in my happiest manner; you will see at first glance that it suits the air. The subject of the song is one of the most interesting passages of my youthful days; and I own that I should be much flattered to see the verses set to an air which would insure celebrity. Perhaps, after all, 'tis the still glowing prejudice of my heart that throws a borrowed lustre over the merits of the composition.

I have partly taken your idea of "Auld Rob Morris." I have adopted the two first verses, and am going on with the song on a new plan, which promises pretty well. I take up one or another, just as the bee of the moment buzzes in my bonnet-lug; and do you, *sans cérémonie*, make what use you choose of the productions. Adieu, &c. Robt. Burns.

(3) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

Edinburgh, *Nov.*, 1792.

Dear Sir,—I was just going to write to you, that on meeting with your Nannie I had fallen violently in love with her. I thank you, therefore, for sending the charming rustic to me, in the dress you wish her to appear before the public. She

does you great credit, and will soon be admitted into the best company.

I regret that your song for the "Lea-rig" is so short. The air is easy, soon sung, and very pleasing; so that, if the singer stops at the end of two stanzas, it is a pleasure lost ere it is well possessed.

Although a dash of our native tongue and manners is doubtless peculiarly congenial and appropriate to our melodies, yet I shall be able to present a considerable number of the very flowers of English song, well adapted to those melodies, which, in England at least, will be the means of recommending them to still greater attention than they have procured there. But you will observe, my plan is that every air shall, in the first place, have verses wholly by Scottish poets; and that those of English writers shall follow as additional songs, for the choice of the singer.

What you say of the "Ewe-bughts" is just; I admire it, and never meant to supplant it. All I requested was, that you would try your hand on some of the inferior stanzas, which are apparently no part of the original song: but this I do not urge, because the song is of sufficient length though those inferior stanzas be omitted, as they will be by the singer of taste. You must not think I expect all the songs to be of superlative merit; that were an unreasonable expectation. I am sensible that no poet can sit down doggedly to pen verses, and succeed well at all times.

I am highly pleased with your humorous and amorous rhapsody on "Bonnie Lesley;" it is a thousand times better than the "Collier's Lassie!" "The Deil he couldna scaith thee," &c., is an eccentric and happy thought. Do you not think, however, that the names of such old heroes as Alexander sound rather queer, unless in pompous or mere burlesque verse? Instead of the line, "And never made anither," I would humbly suggest, "And ne'er made sic anither;" and I would fain have you substitute some other line for "Return to Caledonie," in the last verse, because I think this alteration of the orthography and of the sound of Caledonia disfigures the word, and renders it Hudibrastic.

Of the other song, "My wife's a winsome wee thing," I think the first eight lines very good, but I do not admire the other eight, because four of them are a bare repetition of the first verse. I have been trying to spin a stanza, but could make nothing better than the following: do you mend it, or as Yorick did with the love-letter, whip it up in your own way.

O leeze me on my wee thing,
My bonnie blythsome wee thing;
Sae lang's I ha'e my wee thing,
I'll think my lot divine.

Tho' warld's care we share o't,
And may see meikle mair o't:
Wi' her I'll blythely bear it,
And ne'er a word repine.

You perceive, my dear Sir, I avail myself of the liberty which you condescend to allow me, by speaking freely what I think. Be assured it is not my disposition to pick out the faults of any poem or picture I see; my first and chief object is to discover and be delighted with the beauties of the piece. If I sit down to examine critically, and at leisure, what perhaps you have written in haste, I may happen to observe careless lines, the re-perusal of which might lead you to improve them. The wren will often see what has been overlooked by the eagle.

I remain yours faithfully, &c. G. THOMSON.

P.S.—Your verses upon Highland Mary are just come to hand; they breathe the genuine spirit of poetry, and, like the music, will last for ever. Such verses united to such an air, with the delicate harmony of Pleyel superadded, might form a treat worthy of being presented to Apollo himself. I have heard the sad story of your Mary; you always seem inspired when you write of her.

(5) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[DUMFRIES, *1st Dec.*, 1792.]

YOUR alterations of my "Nannie O" are perfectly right. So are those of "My wife's a wanton wee thing." Your alteration of the second stanza is a positive improvement. Now, my dear Sir, with the freedom which characterizes our correspondence, I must not, cannot alter "Bonnie Lesley." You are right, the word "Alexander" makes the line a little uncouth, but I think the thought is pretty. Of Alexander, beyond all other heroes, it may be said in the sublime language of scripture, that "he went forth conquering and to conquer."

"For Nature made her what she is,
And never made anither" (such a person as she is).

This is, in my opinion, more poetical than "Ne'er made sic anither." However, it is immaterial; make it either way.* "Caledonie," I agree with you, is not so good a word as could be wished, though it is sanctioned in three or four instances by Allan Ramsay; but I cannot help it. In short, that species of stanza is the most difficult that I have ever tried.

The "Lea-rig" is as follows:—

MY AIN KIND DEARIE, O.

[*Second Version.*]

When o'er the hill the e'ening star
Tells bughtin'-time is near, my jo,
And owsen frae the furrow'd field
Return sae dowf and weary, O;
Down by the burn, where birken buds
Wi' dew are hangin' clear, my jo,
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

In mirkest glen at midnight hour,
I'd rove and ne'er be eerie, O,
If through that glen I gaed to thee,
My ain kind dearie, O!
Although the night were ne'er sae wild,
And I were ne'er sae weary, O,
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

The hunter lo'es the morning sun,
To rouse the mountain dear, my jo;
At noon the fisher seeks the glen,
Along the burn to steer, my jo;
Gi'e me the hour of gloaming gray,
It maks my heart sae cheery, O,
To meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O!

I am interrupted. Yours, &c. R. B.

* And Thomson printed it his way.

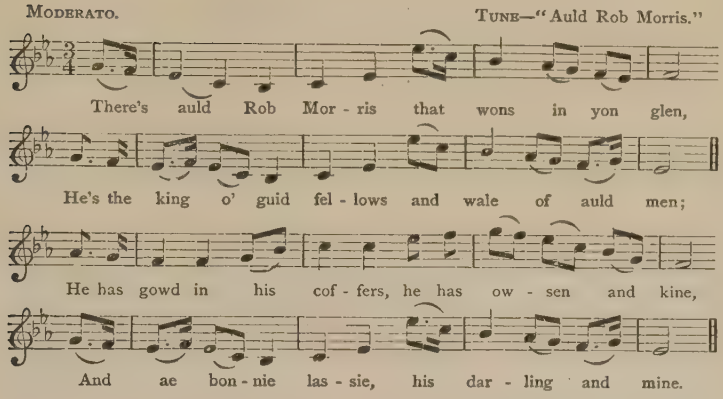
The Lea Rig.

Duncan Gray

(6) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

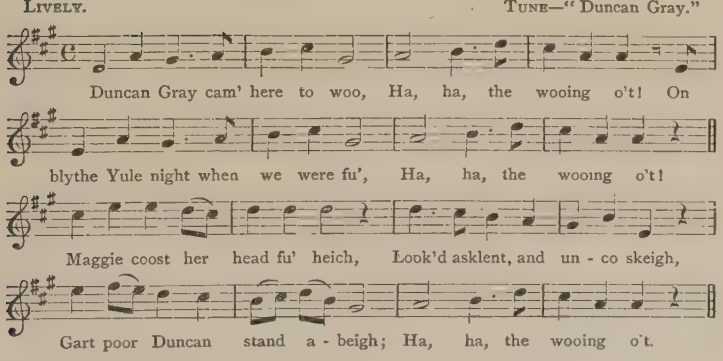
Dec. 4, 1792.

AULD ROB MORRIS.*


MODERATO.
TUNE—"Auld Rob Morris."
There's auld Rob Mor - ris that wons in yon glen,
He's the king o' guid fel - lows and wale of auld men;
He has gowd in his cof - fers, he has ow - sen and kine,
And ae bon - nie las - sie, his dar - ling and mine.

(*See* page 130, Vol. IV.)

DUNCAN GRAY.†


LIVELY.
TUNE—"Duncan Gray."
Duncan Gray cam' here to woo, Ha, ha, the wooing o't! On
blythe Yule night when we were fu', Ha, ha, the wooing o't!
Maggie coost her head fu' heich, Look'd asklent, and un - co skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand a - beigh; Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

(*See* page 132, Vol. IV.)

The foregoing I submit, my dear Sir, to your judgment. Acquit them or condemn them, as seemeth

---

* "The first two lines are from an old ballad—the rest is wholly original."—CURRIE.

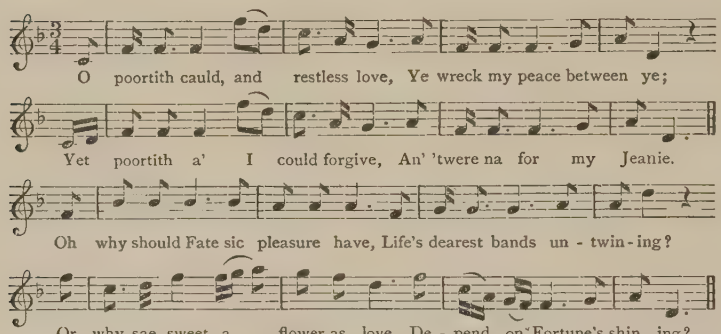
† "This has nothing in common with the old licentious ballad of Duncan Gray but the first line, and part of the third. The rest is wholly original."—CURRIE.

good in your sight. Duncan Gray is that kind of light-horse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature. Yours, R. B.

(7) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

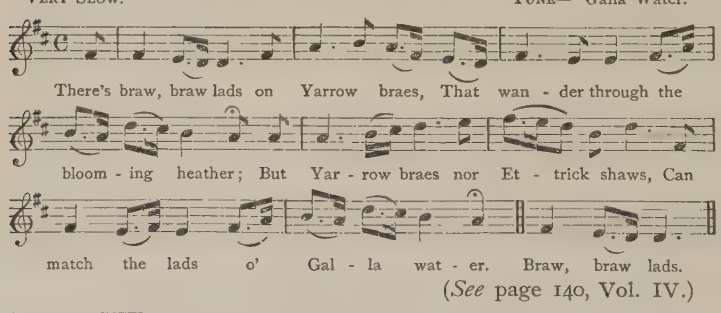
DUMFRIES, *Jan.*, 1793.

O POORTITH CAULD AND RESTLESS LOVE.*


VERY SLOW.
TUNE—"I had a Horse, and I had nae mair."
O poortith cauld, and restless love, Ye wreck my peace between ye;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive, An' 'twere na for my Jeanie.
Oh why should Fate sic pleasure have, Life's dearest bands un - twin - ing?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love, De - pend on Fortune's shin - ing?

(*See* page 138, Vol. IV.)

GALLA WATER.


VERY SLOW.
TUNE—"Galla Water."
There's braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes, That wan - der through the
bloom - ing heather; But Yar - row braes nor Et - trick shaws, Can
match the lads o' Gal - la wat - er. Braw, braw lads.

(*See* page 140, Vol. IV.)

* Jean Lorimer, of Kemmis-hall in Kirkmahoe, is said to have been the subject of these verses. "I have been informed," says Chambers, "that Burns wrote this song in consequence of hearing a gentleman (now a respectable citizen of Edinburgh) sing the old homely ditty, which gives name to the tune, with an effect which made him regret that such pathetic music should be united to such unsentimental poetry. The meeting, I have been further informed, where this circumstance took place, was held in the Poet's favorite tavern, *Johnnie Dowie's*, in the Lawnmarket, Edinburgh; and there, at a subsequent meeting, the new song was also sung for the first time, by the same individual."

Many returns of the season to you, my dear Sir. How comes on your publication? Will these two foregoing be of any service to you? Dispose of them as seemeth good in thy sight. If you are begun with the work, I would like to see one of your proofs, merely from curiosity, and perhaps to try to get you a subscriber or two. I should like to know what songs you print to each tune, besides the verses to which it is set. In short, I would wish to give you my opinion on all the poetry you publish. You know it is my trade, and a man in the way of his trade may suggest useful hints, that escape men of much superior parts and endowments in other things.

If you meet with my dear and much-valued Cunningham, greet him in my name with the compliments of the season. Yours, &c. R. B.

(4) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 20*th January*, 1793.

YOU make me happy, my dear Sir, and thousands will be happy to see the charming songs you have sent me. Many merry returns of the season to you, and may you long continue, among the sons and daughters of Caledonia, to delight them and to honor yourself.

The four last songs with which you favored me, viz., "Auld Rob Morris," "Duncan Gray," "Galla Water," and "Cauld Kail," are admirable. Duncan is indeed a lad of grace, and his humor will endear him to every body.

The distracted lover in "Auld Rob," and the happy shepherdess in "Galla Water," exhibit an excellent contrast: they speak from genuine feeling, and powerfully touch the heart.

The number of songs which I had originally in view was limited; but I now resolve to include every Scotch air and song worth singing, leaving none behind but mere gleanings, to which the publishers of *omnegatherum* are welcome. I would rather be the editor of a collection from which nothing could be taken away, than of one to which nothing could be added. We intend presenting the subscribers with two beautiful stroke engravings—the one characteristic of the plaintive, and the

other of the lively songs; and I have Dr. Beattie's promise of an essay upon the subject of our national music, if his health will permit him to write it. As a number of our songs have doubtless been called forth by particular events, or by the charms of peerless damsels, there must be many curious anecdotes relating to them.

The late Mr. Tytler* of Woodhouselee, I believe, knew more of this than any body, for he joined to the pursuits of an antiquary a taste for poetry, besides being a man of the world, and possessing an enthusiasm for music beyond most of his contemporaries. He was quite pleased with this plan of mine, for I may say it has been solely managed by me, and we had several long conversations about it when it was in embryo. If I could simply mention the name of the heroine of each song, and the incident which occasioned the verses, it would be gratifying. Pray, will you send me any information of this sort, as well with regard to your own songs, as the old ones?

To all the favorite songs of the plaintive or pastoral kind will be joined the delicate accompaniments, &c., of Pleyel. To those of the comic and humorous class, I think accompaniments scarcely necessary; they are chiefly fitted for the conviviality of the festive board, and a tuneful voice, with a proper delivery of the words, renders them perfect. Nevertheless, to these I propose adding bass accompaniments, because then they are fitted either for singing or for instrumental performance, when there happens to be no singer. I mean to employ our right trusty friend, Mr. Clarke, to set the bass to these, which he assures me he will do *con amore*, and with much greater attention than he ever bestowed on any thing of the kind. But for this last class of airs I will not attempt to find more than one set of verses.

That eccentric bard, Peter Pindar, has started I know not how many difficulties about writing for the airs I sent to him, because of the peculiarity of their measure, and the trammels they impose on his flying Pegasus. I subjoin for your perusal the only one I have yet got from him, being for the fine air "Lord Gregory." The Scots verses printed with that air are taken from the middle of an old ballad, called "The Lass of Lochryan," which I do not admire. I have set down the air, therefore, as a creditor of yours. Many of the Jacobite songs are replete with wit and humor; might not the best of these be included in our volume of comic songs?

* Tytler, well known as a defender of Mary Queen of Scots.

POSTSCRIPT, FROM THE HON. A. ERSKINE.*—Mr. Thomson has been so obliging as to give me a perusal of your songs. "Highland Mary" is most enchantingly pathetic, and "Duncan Gray" possesses native genuine humor: "Spak o' lowpin' o'er a linn," is a line of itself that should make you immortal. I sometimes hear of you from our mutual friend Cunningham, who is a most excellent fellow, and possesses, above all men I know, the charm of a most obliging disposition. You kindly promised me, about a year ago, a collection of your unpublished productions, religious and amorous. I know from experience how irksome it is to copy. If you will get any trusty person in Dumfries to write them over fair, I will give Peter Hill whatever money he asks for his trouble, and I certainly shall not betray your confidence. I am, your hearty admirer,

ANDREW ERSKINE.

(8) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

26th Jan., 1793.

I APPROVE greatly, my dear Sir, of your plans. Dr. Beattie's essay will of itself be a treasure. On my part, I mean to draw up an appendix to the Doctor's essay, containing my stock of anecdotes, &c., of our Scots songs. All the late Mr. Tytler's anecdotes I have by me, taken down in the course of my acquaintance with him from his own mouth. I am such an enthusiast that, in the course of my several peregrinations through Scotland, I made a pilgrimage to the individual spot from which every song took its rise; "Lochaber" and the "Braes of Ballenden" excepted. So far as the locality, either from the title of the air or the tenor of the song, could be ascertained, I have paid my devotions at the particular shrine of every Scots muse.

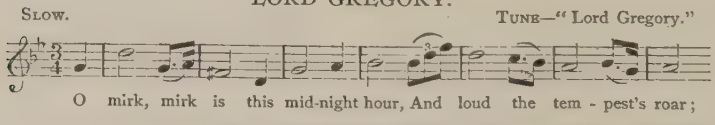
* The Hon. Andrew Erskine was a younger brother of "the musical Earl of Kellie. He was originally in the army, but his tastes and habits were of a literary character. He was one of the contributors to 'Donaldson's Collection of Original Poems by Scottish Gentlemen,' and the author in part of a curious and rare volume, entitled 'Letters between the Hon. Andrew Erskine and James Boswell, Esq.' Edinburgh, 1763. These letters are partly in prose, and partly in verse."

I do not doubt but you might make a very valuable collection of Jacobite songs; but would it give no offence? In the meantime, do not you think that some of them, particularly "The Sow's Tail to Geordie," as an air, with other words, might be well worth a place in your collection of lively songs?

If it were possible to procure songs of merit, it would be proper to have one set of Scots words to every air, and that the set of words to which the notes ought to be set. There is a *naïveté*, a pastoral simplicity, in a slight intermixture of Scots words and phraseology, which is more in unison (at least to my taste, and, I will add, to every genuine Caledonian taste) with the simple pathos or rustic sprightliness of our native music, than any English verses whatever. For instance, in my "Auld Robin Morris" you propose, instead of the word "descriving," to substitute the word "all-telling"—which would spoil the rusticity, the pastoral of the stanza.

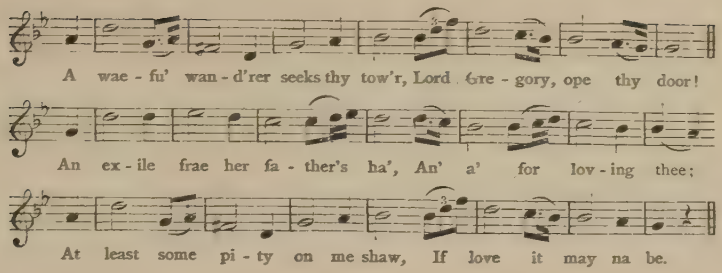
The very name of Peter Pindar is an acquisition to your work. His "Gregory" is beautiful. I have tried to give you a set of stanzas in Scots on the same subject, which are at your service. Not that I intend to enter the lists with Peter; that would be presumption indeed. My song, though much inferior in poetic merit, has, I think, more of the ballad simplicity in it.

LORD GREGORY.*



* To enable the reader to compare the "Lord Gregory" of Burns with that of Peter Pindar, we subjoin Dr. Wolcott's stanzas:—

Ah ope, Lord Gregory, thy door!
A midnight wanderer sighs;
Hard rush the rains, the tempests roar,
And lightnings cleave the skies.


A wae - fu' wan - d'rer seeks thy tow'r, Lord Gre - gory, ope thy door!
An ex - ile frae her fa - ther's ha', An' a' for lov - ing thee;
At least some pi - ty on me shaw, If love it may na be.

Lord Gregory, mind'st thou not the grove,
By bonnie Irwine side,
Where first I own'd that virgin-love
I lang, lang had denied?
How aften didst thou pledge and vow
Thou wad for aye be mine;
And my fond heart, itsel' sae true,
It ne'er mistrusted thine.

Hard is thy heart, Lord Gregory,
And flinty is thy breast:
Thou dart of heav'n that flashest by,
O wilt thou give me rest!
Ye mustering thunders from above,
Your willing victim see!
But spare and pardon my false love,
His wrangs to heaven and me!

* Your remark on the first stanza of my "Highland Mary" is just; but I cannot alter it without injuring the poetry in proportion as I mend the perspicuity; so, if you please, we will let it stand as it is,—my

---

Who comes with woe at this drear night—
A pilgrim of the gloom?
If she whose love did once delight,
My cot shall yield her room.

Alas! thou heard'st a pilgrim mourn,
That once was priz'd by thee:
Think of the ring by yonder burn
Thou gav'st to love and me.

But should'st thou not poor Marian know,
I'll turn my feet and part;
And think the storms that round me blow
Far kinder than thy heart.

* A letter of Thomson's is missing here, for we do not find his "remarks."—G. G.

other songs, you will see what alterations I have made in them.*

If you think my name can be of any service to your advertisement, you are welcome.

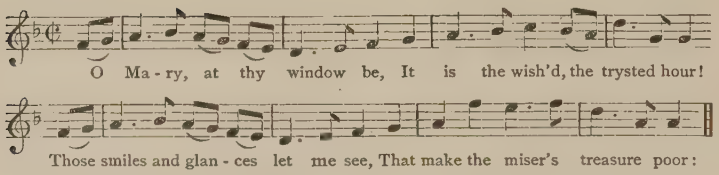
My most respectful compliments to the honorable gentleman who favored me with a postscript in your last. He shall hear from me and receive his MSS. soon. R. B.

(9) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

20th March, 1793.

MARY MORISON.

SLOWISH. TUNE—"The Miller."


O Ma - ry, at thy window be, It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glan - ces let me see, That make the miser's treasure poor:

---

* The structural defect pointed out by Mr. Thomson, and here confessed by Burns, has been frequently cavilled at by critics; but when we see that the poet deliberately declined to attempt an alteration on his text, as printed at page 128, Vol. IV., we may be excused for rejecting a proposed *improvement* by a practised versifier—Mr. Peter Gardner, of the Grange Academy, Edinburgh. Burns opens his pathetic dirge with an apostrophe to the *locality* where he took his last farewell of Mary, and pours out a blessing on the scene, thus:—

"Green be your woods and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie,—
There Simmer first unfauld her robes,
And *there* the langest tarry;
For *there* I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary!"

Mr. Gardner proposes to mend a supposed want of perspicuity in these lines by introducing another apostrophe at the opening of the second four lines, thus:—

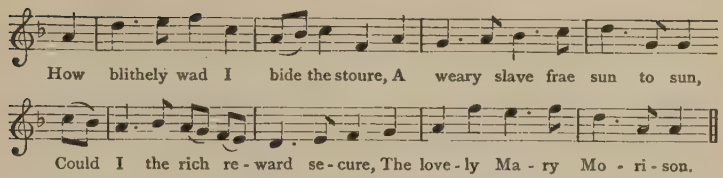
"There, Simmer! first unfauld thy robes," etc.

A much more natural change on that line would be

"May Simmer there first spread her robes," etc.—DOUGLAS.

[We think there is no difficulty in either grammar or perspicuity in these lines. Try them as follows:—

"There Simmer first unfaulds her robes,
And there they langest tarry." G. G.]



(*See* page 25, Vol. I.)

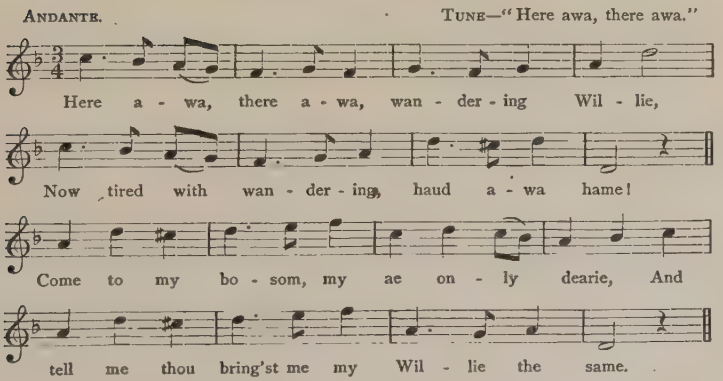
My Dear Sir,—The song prefixed is one of my juvenile works. I leave it in your hands. I do not think it very remarkable, either for its merits or demerits. It is impossible (at least I feel it so in my stinted powers) to be always original, entertaining, and witty.

What is become of the list, &c., of your songs? I shall be out of all temper with you by-and-by. I have always looked upon myself as the prince of indolent correspondents, and valued myself accordingly; and I will not, cannot, bear rivalship from you nor any body else. I wish much to have the list, and to hear how you come on. Yours, Robt. Burns.

([10]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

March, 1793.

WANDERING WILLIE.

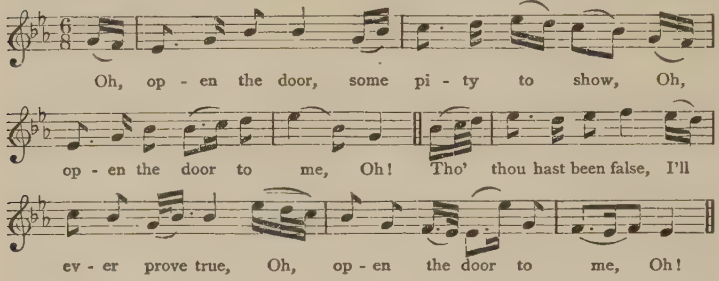

Andante.
Tune—"Here awa, there awa."
Here a-wa, there a-wa, wan-der-ing Wil-lie,
Now tired with wan-der-ing, haud a-wa hame!
Come to my bo-som, my ae on-ly dearie, And
tell me thou bring'st me my Wil-lie the same.

(*See* page 146, Vol. IV.)

I LEAVE it to you, my dear Sir, to determine whether the above, or the old, "Thro' the lang muir,"* be the best.

OPEN THE DOOR TO ME, OH.

AFFETTUOSO. TUNE—"Open the Door."


Oh, op - en the door, some pi - ty to show, Oh,
op - en the door to me, Oh! Tho' thou hast been false, I'll
ev - er prove true, Oh, op - en the door to me, Oh!

(*See* page 147, Vol. IV.)

I do not know whether this song be really mended.

R. B.

(5) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *2nd April*, 1793.

I WILL not recognize the title you give yourself, "the Prince of *indolent* correspondents;" but if the adjective were taken away, I think the title would then fit you exactly. It gives me pleasure to find you can furnish anecdotes with respect to most of the songs: these will be a literary curiosity.

I now send you my list of the songs, which I believe will be found nearly complete. I have put down the first lines of all the English songs which I propose giving in addition to the Scotch verses. If any others occur to you, better adapted to the character of the airs, pray mention them, when you favor me with your strictures upon everything else relating to the work.

Pleyel has lately sent me a number of the songs, with his symphonies and accompaniments added to them. I wish you were here, that I might serve up some of them to you with your own verses, by way of dessert after dinner. There is so

* Burns afterwards altered the words of his own version, which will be found at page 146, Vol. IV.

much delightful fancy in the symphonies, and such a delicate simplicity in the accompaniments—they are, indeed, beyond all praise.

I am very much pleased with the several last productions of your muse: your "Lord Gregory," in my estimation, is more interesting than Peter's, beautiful as his is! Your "Here awa, Willie," must undergo some alterations to suit the air. Mr. Erskine and I have been conning it over; he will suggest what is necessary to make them a fit match.*

The gentleman I have mentioned, whose fine taste you are no stranger to, is so well-pleased both with the musical and poetical part of our work, that he has volunteered his assistance, and has already written four songs for it, which by his own desire I send for your perusal. Yours, &c.,

G. THOMSON.

(11) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

7th April, 1793.

THANK you, my dear Sir, for your packet. You cannot imagine how much this business of composing for your publication has added to my enjoyments. What with my early attachment to ballads, your book, &c., ballad-making is now as completely my hobby-horse as ever fortification was Uncle Toby's; so I'll e'en canter it away till I come to the limit of my race (God grant that I may take the right side of the winning-post!), and then cheerfully looking back on the honest folks with whom I have been happy, I shall say or sing, "Sae merry as we a' hae been!" and raising my last looks to the whole human race, the last words of the voice of "Coila" shall be, "Good night, and joy be wi' you a'!" So much for my last words; now for a few present remarks, as they have occurred at random on looking over your list.

The first lines of "The last time I came o'er the

* See page 146, Vol. IV.

moor," and several other lines in it, are beautiful; but in my opinion—pardon me, revered shade of Ramsay!—the song is unworthy of the divine air. I shall try to make or mend. "For ever, fortune, wilt thou prove," is a charming song, but "Logan burn and Logan braes" are sweetly susceptible of rural imagery: I'll try that likewise, and if I succeed, the other song may class among the English ones. I remember the two last lines of a verse in some of the old songs of "Logan Water" (for I know a good many different ones) which I think pretty:—

"Now my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes."

"My Patie is a lover gay," is unequal. "His mind is never muddy," is a muddy expression indeed.

"Then I'll resign and marry Pate,
And syne my cockernony."

This is surely far unworthy of Ramsay, or your book. My song, "Rigs of Barley," to the same tune does not altogether please me; but if I can mend it, and thrash a few loose sentiments out of it, I will submit it to your consideration. "The Lass o' Patie's Mill" is one of Ramsay's best songs; but there is one loose sentiment in it, which my much-valued friend Mr. Erskine, who has so well approved "Down the burn, Davie lad," will take into his critical consideration. In Sir J. Sinclair's statistical volumes are two claims, one, I think, from Aberdeenshire, and the other from Ayrshire, for the honor of this song. The following anecdote, which I had from the present Sir William Cunningham of Robertland, who had it of the late John, Earl of Loudon, I can, on such authorities, believe:—

Allan Ramsay was residing at Loudon Castle with the then earl, father to Earl John; and one forenoon

riding, or walking out together, his Lordship and Allan passed a sweet romantic spot on Irvine Water, still called "Patie's Mill," where a bonnie lass was "tedding hay, bare-headed on the green." My Lord observed to Allan that it would be a fine theme for a song. Ramsay took the hint, and lingering behind, he composed the first sketch of it, which he produced at dinner.

"The yellow-haired Laddie" deserves the best verses that were ever composed, but I dare not venture on it. The verses you intend, though good, are not quite worthy of it.

"I wish I were where Helen lies." The only tolerable set of this song that I know is in Pinkerton's collection.

"One day I heard Mary say" is a fine song; but for consistency's sake, alter the name "Adonis." Was there ever such banns published as a purpose of marriage between Adonis and Mary? These Greek and Roman pastoral appellations have a flat, insipid effect in a Scots song. I agree with you that my song, "There's nought but care on every hand," is much superior to "Poortith Cauld." The original song "The Mill, Mill, O," though excellent, is, on account of delicacy, inadmissible; still I like the title, and think a Scottish song would suit the notes best; and let your chosen song, which is very pretty, follow as an English set. Though I give Johnson one edition of my songs, that does not give away the copyright, so you may take "Thou lingering star, with less'ning ray," to the tune of "Hughie Graham," or other songs of mine. "Ye gallants bright, I rede you right," &c., is my composition. "The banks of the Dee" is, you know, literally "Langolee" to slow time. The song is well enough, but has some false imagery in it: for instance,

"And sweetly the nightingale sung from the tree."

In the first place, the nightingale sings in a low bush, but never from a tree; and in the second place, there never was a nightingale seen, or heard, on the banks of the Dee, or any other river in Scotland. Exotic rural imagery is always comparatively flat. If I could hit on another stanza, equal to "The small birds rejoice," &c., I do myself honestly avow that I think it a superior song.* "John Anderson, my jo"—the song to this tune in Johnson's Museum is my composition, and I think it not my worst; if it suit you, take it and welcome. Your collection of sentimental and pathetic songs is, in my opinion, very complete; but not so your comic ones. Where are "Tullochgorum," "Lumps o' puddin'," "Tibbie Fowler," and several others, which, in my humble judgment, are well worthy of preservation? There is also one sentimental song of mine in the Museum, which never was known out of the immediate neighborhood, until I got it taken down from a country girl's singing. It is called "Craigieburn Wood," and in the opinion of Mr. Clarke is one of the sweetest Scottish songs. He is quite an enthusiast about it: and I would take his taste in Scottish music against the taste of most connoisseurs.

You are quite right in inserting the last five in your list, though they are certainly Irish. "Shepherds, I have lost my love!" is to me a heavenly air—what would you think of a set of Scottish verses to it? I have made one to it a good while ago, which I think is the best song I ever composed, but in its original state is not quite a lady's song. I inclose the original, which please present with my best compliments to Mr. Erskine; and I also inclose an *altered*, not *amended* copy for you, if you choose

* "It will be found, in the course of this Correspondence, that the bard produced a second stanza of 'The Chevalier's Lament' (to which he here alludes) worthy of the first."—CURRIE.

The Soldiers Return.

to set the tune to it, and let the Irish verses follow.*

Mr. Erskine's songs are all pretty, but his "Lone Vale" is divine. Yours, &c. R. B.

Let me know just how you like these random hints.
R. B.

([6]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *April*, 1793.

I REJOICE to find, my dear Sir, that ballad-making continues to be your hobby-horse. Great pity 'twould be were it otherwise. I hope you will amble it away for many a year, and "witch the world with your horsemanship."

I know there are a good many lively songs of merit that I have not put down in the list sent you; but I have them all in my eye. "My Patie is a lover gay," though a little unequal, is a natural and very pleasing song, and I humbly think we ought not to displace or alter it, except the last stanza. . . .†

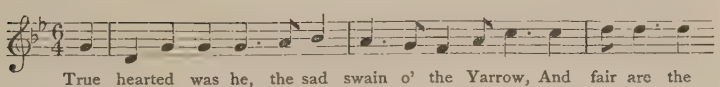
I am, &c., G. THOMSON.

([12]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

April, 1793.

JESSIE.

SLOW. TUNE—"Adieu Dundee."



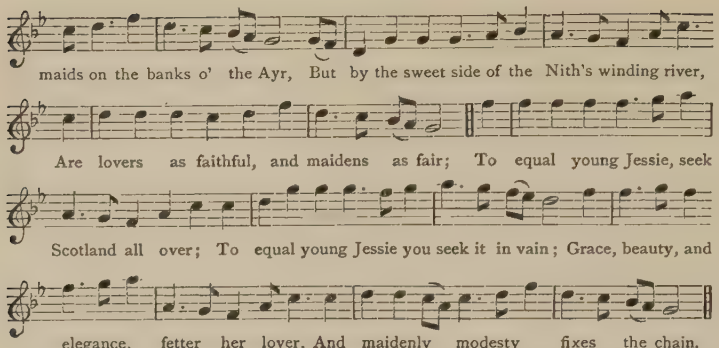
* "Mr. Thomson, it appears, did not approve of this song, even in its altered state. It does not appear in the Correspondence; but it is probably one to be found in his MSS. beginning—

'Yestreen I got a pint of wine,
A place where body saw na;
Yestreen lay on this breast of mine,
The gowden locks of Anna.'

(*See* page 143, Vol. III.)

"It is highly characteristic of our Bard, but the train of sentiment does not correspond with the air to which he proposes it should be allied."—CURRIE.

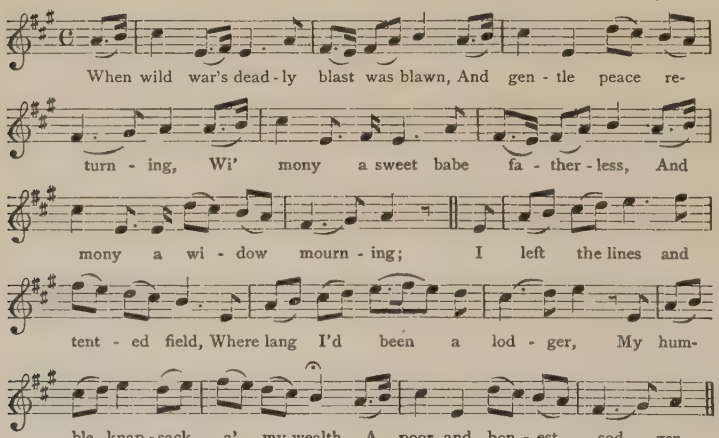
† "The original letter from Mr. Thomson contains many observations on Scottish songs, and on the manner of adapting the words to the music, which, at his desire, are suppressed. The subsequent letter of Burns refers to several of these observations."—CURRIE.


maids on the banks o' the Ayr, But by the sweet side of the Nith's winding river,
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair; To equal young Jessie, seek
Scotland all over; To equal young Jessie you seek it in vain; Grace, beauty, and
elegance, fetter her lover, And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

(*See* page 148, Vol. IV.)

THE POOR AND HONEST SODGER.

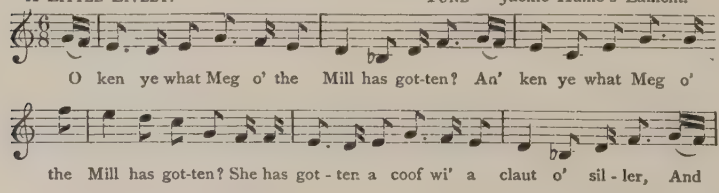
ANDANTE. TUNE—"The Mill, Mill, O."

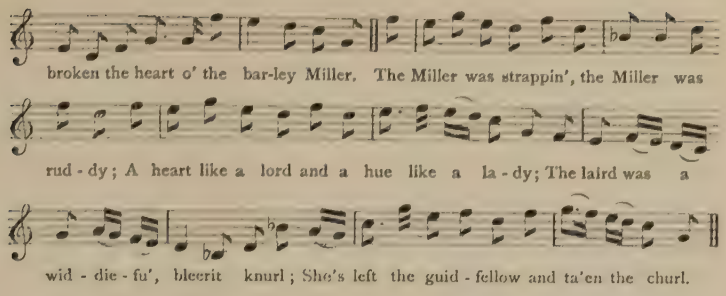

When wild war's dead-ly blast was blawn, And gen - tle peace re-
turn - ing, Wi' mony a sweet babe fa - ther - less, And
mony a wi - dow mourn - ing; I left the lines and
tent - ed field, Where lang I'd been a lod - ger, My hum-
ble knap-sack a' my wealth, A poor and hon - est sod - ger.

(*See* page 151, Vol. IV.)

MEG O' THE MILL.

A LITTLE LIVELY. TUNE—"Jackie Hume's Lament."




broken the heart o' the bar-ley Miller. The Miller was strappin', the Miller was
rud - dy; A heart like a lord and a hue like a la - dy; The laird was a
wid - die - fu', bleerit knurl; She's left the guid - fellow and ta'en the churl.

(*See* page 150, Vol. IV.)

I HAVE yours, my dear Sir, this moment. I shall answer it and your former letter, in my desultory way of saying whatever comes uppermost. I am decidedly against setting "The gloomy night is gathering fast" to the air of "My Nannie, O!" Musical expression, as you said in one of your late letters, is very ambiguous; but whatever a few cognoscente may think, you will find that eight out of ten of your Scots subscribers prefer for that air my own song "My Nannie, O!" though an inferior composition to "The gloomy night," &c. Besides, "The Banks of Ayr" has been set by a Mr. Dasti to the original melody, and being a favorite song with Sutherland's company of strolling comedians, it is now a well-known, popular air over the west and south of Scotland.

The business of many of our tunes wanting, at the beginning, what fiddlers call the starting-note, is often a rub to us poor rhymers.

> "There's braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
> That wander through the blooming heather,"

you may alter to

> "Braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
> Ye wander," &c.

My song, "Here awa', there awa'," as amended

by Mr. Erskine, I entirely approve of, and return you.*

"The yellow haired laddie" I would dispose of thus: I would set the air to the oldest of the songs to that tune:—

"The yellow-haired laddie sat on yon burn" (brae),

and in place in letter-press after it, as an English set,

"In April when primroses paint the sweet plain."

Give me leave to criticise your taste in the only thing in which it is, in my opinion, reprehensible. You know I ought to know something of my own trade. Of pathos, sentiment, and point you are a complete judge; but there is a quality more necessary than either in a song, and which is the very essence of a ballad, I mean simplicity: now, if I mistake not, this last feature you are a little apt to sacrifice to the foregoing.

Ramsay, as every other poet, has not been always equally happy in his pieces; still I cannot approve of taking such liberties with an author as Mr. Walker proposes doing with "The last time I came o'er the moor." Let a poet, if he chooses, take up the idea of another, and work it into a piece of his own; but to mangle the works of the poor bard, whose tuneful tongue is now mute for ever in the dark and narrow house, by Heaven, 'twould be sacrilege! I grant that Mr. Walker's version is an improvement; but I know Mr. Walker well and esteem him much; let him mend the song as the Highlander mended his gun: he gave it a new stock, a new lock, and a new barrel.

I do not, by this, object to leaving out improper stanzas, where that can be done without spoiling the whole. One stanza in "The Lass o' Patie's Mill"

* "The reader has already seen that Burns did not finally adopt all of Mr. Erskine's alterations."—CURRIE.

must be left out; the song will be nothing worse for it. I am not sure if we can take the same liberty with "Corn rigs are bonie:" perhaps it might want the last stanza and be the better for it. I shall be extremely sorry if you set any other song to the air "She rose and loot me in," except the song of that title. It would be cruel to spoil the allusion in poor, unfortunate M'Donald's pretty ode.

Could you spare me for a while "My lodging is on the cold ground?"—I mean, could you defer it until the latest period of your publication, and I will try to make a new song to it.

I would be happy to be favored with a list of the twenty-five you mean to publish first. Remember that on these will, in a great measure, depend the fate of your work with the public: for that reason it will be necessary to select and arrange them with double circumspection.

"Cauld kail in Aberdeen" you must leave with me yet a while. I have vowed to have a song to that air on the lady whom I attempted to celebrate in the verses, "Poortith cauld and restless love." At any rate, my other song, "Green grow the rashes," will never suit. That song is current in Scotland under the old title, and to the merry old tune of that name, which of course would mar the progress of your song to celebrity. Your book will be the standard of Scots songs for the future: let this idea ever keep your judgment on the alarm.

I send a song on a celebrated toast in this country, to suit "Bonnie Dundee." I send you also a ballad to the "Mill, Mill, O."*

"The last time I came o'er the moor," I would fain attempt to make a Scots song for, and let Ramsay's

* "The song to the tune of 'Bonnie Dundee' is that at page 148, Vol. IV. The ballad to the 'Mill, Mill, O' is that beginning—

'When wild war's deadly blast was blawn.'"—CURRIE.

be the English set. You shall hear from me soon. When you go to London on this business, can you come by Dumfries? I have still several MS. Scots airs by me, which I have picked up mostly from the singing of country lasses. They please me vastly; but your learned lugs would perhaps be displeased with the very feature for which I like them. I call them simple; you would pronounce them silly. Do you know a fine air called "Jackie Hume's Lament?" I have a song of considerable merit to that air. I'll inclose you both the song and tune, as I had them ready to send to Johnson's Museum.* I send you likewise, to me, a beautiful little air, which I had taken down from *viva voce.*† I know these songs are not to have the luck to please you; else you might be welcome to them. Preserve them carefully and return them to me, as I have no other copy.

Adieu. R. B.

([13]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

April, 1793.

THE LAST TIME I CAME O'ER THE MOOR.

The last time I came o'er the moor,
And left Maria's dwelling,
What throes, what tortures passing cure,
Were in my bosom swelling, &c.

My Dear Sir,—I had scarcely put my last letter into the post-office when I took up the subject of "The last time I came o'er the moor," and ere I slept, drew the outlines of the foregoing.‡ How far I have succeeded, I leave on this, as on every other occasion, to you to decide. I own my vanity is flattered, when

* The song alluded to is, "O ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?"

† The air here mentioned is that for which he wrote the ballad of "Bonnie Jean."

‡ This song will be found at page 162, Vol. IV.

you give my songs a place in your elegant and superb work; but to be of service to the work is my first wish. As I have often told you, I do not in a single instance wish you, out of compliment to me, to insert any thing of mine. If you can send me, as I said in my last hotch-potch epistle, a list of your first twenty-five songs, I will add the authors' names and return you the list. One hint only let me give you, where you have, as in "Katharine Ogie," set another song to the air, it will be proper also to prefix the old name of the tune, thus:—"HIGHLAND MARY.—Tune *Katharine Ogie.*" Another hint you will forgive—whatever Mr. Pleyel does, let him not alter one iota of the original Scots airs—I mean in the song department; our friend Clarke, than whom you know there is not a better judge of the subject, complains that in the air "Lea-Rig" the accent is altered. But let our national airs preserve their native features. They are, I own, frequently wild, and irreducible to the modern rule; but on that very eccentricity, perhaps, depends a great part of their effect.—Farewell. R. BURNS.

(7) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 24*th April*, 1793.

I HEARTILY thank you, my dear Sir, for your last two letters, and the songs which accompanied them. I am always both instructed and entertained by your observations; and the frankness with which you speak out your mind is to me highly agreeable. It is very possible I may not have the true idea of simplicity in composition. I confess there are several songs, of Allan Ramsay's for example, that I think silly enough, which another person, more conversant than I have been with country people, would perhaps call simple and natural. But the lowest scenes of simple nature will not please generally, if copied precisely as they are. The poet, like the painter, must select what will form an agreeable as well as a natural picture. On this subject it were easy to enlarge; but, at present, suffice it to say that I consider simplicity, rightly

understood, as a most essential quality in composition, and the ground-work of beauty in all the arts. I will gladly appropriate your most interesting new ballad, "When wild war's deadly blast," &c., to the "Mill, Mill, O," as well as the two other songs to their respective airs; but the third and fourth lines of the first verse must undergo some little alteration in order to suit the music. Pleyel does not alter a single note of the songs. That would be absurd indeed! With the airs which he introduces into the sonatas I allow him to take such liberties as he pleases; but that has nothing to do with the songs. . . . G. THOMSON.

P.S.—I wish you would do as you proposed with your "Rigs o' Barley." If the loose sentiments are thrashed out of it, I will find an air for it; but as to this there is no hurry.

([14]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

June, 1793.

WHEN I tell you, my dear Sir, that a friend of mine, in whom I am much interested, has fallen a sacrifice to these accursed times, you will easily allow that it might unhinge me for doing any good among ballads. My own loss, as to pecuniary matters, is trifling; but the total ruin of a much-loved friend is a loss indeed. Pardon my seeming inattention to your last commands.

I cannot alter the disputed lines in the "Mill, Mill, O." * What you think a defect, I esteem as a positive beauty: so you see how doctors differ. I shall

* "The lines were the third and fourth—

'Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
And mony a widow mourning.'

"As our poet had maintained a long silence, and the first number of Mr. Thomson's Musical Work was in the press, this gentleman ventured, by Mr. Erskine's advice, to substitute for them in that publication—

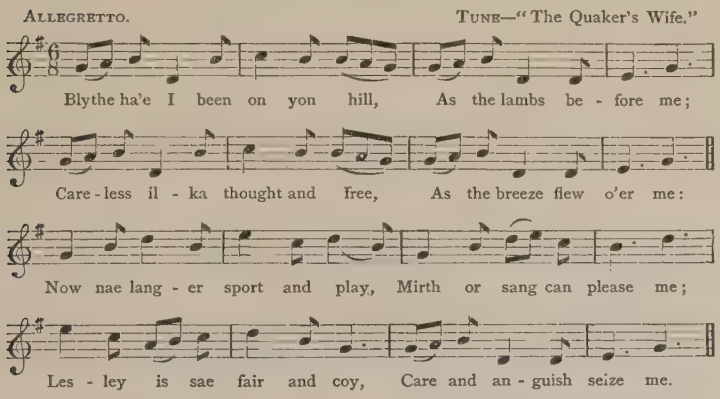
'And eyes again with pleasure beam'd
That had been bleared with mourning.'

Though better suited to the music, these lines are inferior to the original. This is the only alteration adopted by Mr. Thomson, which Burns did not approve, or at least assent to."—CURRIE.

now, with as much alacrity as I can muster, go on with your commands.

You know Frazer, the hautboy-player in Edinburgh —he is here, instructing a band of music for a fencible corps quartered in this county. Among many of his airs that please me, there is one well known, as a reel, by the name of "The Quaker's Wife;" and which I remember a grand-aunt of mine used to sing, by the name of "Liggeram Cosh, my bonnie wee lass." Mr. Frazer plays it slow, and with an expression that quite charms me. I became such an enthusiast about it that I made a song for it, which I here subjoin, and inclose Frazer's set of the tune. If they hit your fancy, they are at your service; if not, return me the tune, and I will put it in Johnson's Museum. I think the song is not in my worst manner.

BLYTHE HA'E I BEEN.*


Allegretto.
Tune—"The Quaker's Wife."
Blythe ha'e I been on yon hill, As the lambs be - fore me;
Care - less il - ka thought and free, As the breeze flew o'er me:
Now nae lang - er sport and play, Mirth or sang can please me;
Les - ley is sae fair and coy, Care and an - guish seize me.

(*See* page 163, Vol. IV.)

I should wish to hear how this pleases you.

Yours, R. B.

* Miss Lesley Baillie is the subject of this song.

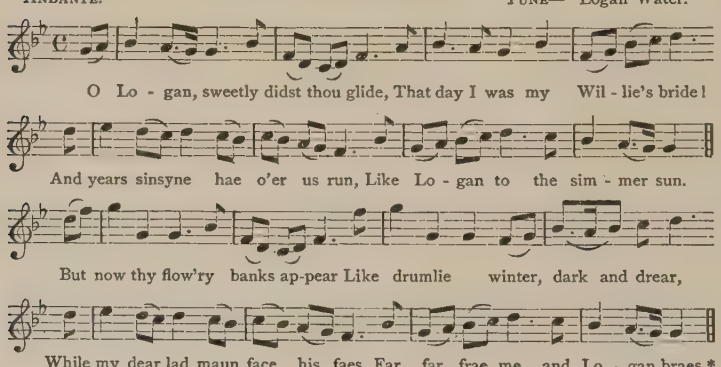
([15]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

25th June, 1793.

HAVE you ever, my dear Sir, felt your bosom ready to burst with indignation on reading of those mighty villains who divide kingdom against kingdom, desolate provinces, and lay nations waste, out of the wantonness of ambition, or often from still more ignoble passions? In a mood of this kind to-day, I recollected the air of "Logan Water;" and it occurred to me that its querulous melody probably had its origin from the plaintive indignation of some swelling, suffering heart, fired at the tyrannic strides of some public destroyer; and overwhelmed with private distress, the consequence of a country's ruin. If I have done any thing at all like justice to my feelings, the following song, composed in three-quarters of an hour's meditation in my elbow chair, ought to have some merit:—

LOGAN BRAES.

ANDANTE. TUNE—"Logan Water."


O Lo - gan, sweetly didst thou glide, That day I was my Wil - lie's bride!
And years sinsyne hae o'er us run, Like Lo - gan to the sim - mer sun.
But now thy flow'ry banks ap-pear Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his faes, Far, far frae me and Lo - gan braes.*

(*See* page 164, Vol. IV.)

* Stenhouse says, "About the year 1783 a new song, to the tune of 'Logan Water,' written by Mr. John Mayne, a native of Glasgow, became very popular in the south-west of Scotland. It was published along with the old air, not long thereafter, by the music-sellers, and soon became a favorite at Vauxhall and other parts of the kingdom. It was afterwards printed in the *Star* Newspaper

Logan Bros.

Do you know the following beautiful little fragment in Witherspoon's collection of Scots song?

O gin my love were yon red rose,
That grows upon the castle wa':
And I mysel' a drap o' dew,
Into her bonnie breast to fa'!

O, there beyond expression blest,
I'd feast on beauty a' the night;
Seal'd on her silk-saft faulds to rest,
Till fley'd awa by Phœbus' light.

This thought is inexpressibly beautiful; and quite, so far as I know, original. It is too short for a song, else I would forswear you altogether unless you gave it a place. I have often tried to eke a stanza to it, but in vain. After balancing myself for a musing five minutes, on the hind-legs of my elbow-chair, I produced the following.

---

of London, signed with the initial letter of the author's surname, on 23rd May, 1789, as follows:—

'By Logan's streams that rin sae deep
Fu' aft wi' glee I've herded sheep;
Herded sheep or gather'd slaes,
Wi' my dear lad on Logan braes:
But, wae's my heart! thae days are gane,
And fu' o' grief I herd my lane;
While my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes!

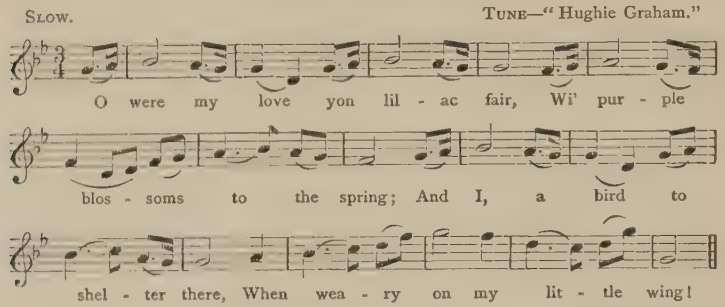
'Nae mair at Logan kirk will he,
Atween the preachings meet wi' me,
Meet wi' me, or, when it's mirk,
Convoy me hame frae Logan kirk.
I weel may sing—thae days are gane!
Frae kirk and fair I come alane,
While my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes!'

"Burns imagined that this delightful composition of Mr. Mayne was of considerable antiquity. In a letter to a correspondent, dated 7th April, 1793, he says, 'I remember the two last lines of a verse in some of the old songs of Logan Water, which I think pretty.'

'Now my dear lad maun face his faes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes.'

"These two lines Burns has incorporated into his elegant stanzas to the same tune, composed in one of his pensive moods."

V. M.

The verses are far inferior to the foregoing, I frankly confess; but if worthy of insertion at all, they might be first in place: as every poet, who knows any thing of his trade, will husband his best thoughts for a concluding stroke. R. B.

Slow.
Tune—"Hughie Graham."
O were my love yon lil - ac fair, Wi' pur - ple
blos - soms to the spring; And I, a bird to
shel - ter there, When wea - ry on my lit - tle wing!

How I wad mourn, when it was torn
By autumn wild and winter rude!
But I wad sing on wanton wing,
When youthfu' May its bloom renew'd.*

(8) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

Monday, 1*st July*, 1793.

I am extremely sorry, my good Sir, that any thing should happen to unhinge you. The times are terribly out of tune; and when harmony will be restored, Heaven knows.

The first book of songs, just published, will be despatched to you along with this. Let me be favored with your opinion of it frankly and freely.

I shall certainly give a place to the song you have written for the "Quaker's Wife;" it is quite enchanting. Pray will you return the list of songs, with such airs added to it as you think ought to be included. The business now rests entirely on myself, the gentlemen who originally agreed to join the speculation having requested to be off. No matter, a loser I cannot be. The superior excellence of the work will create a

* The fragment which Burns has here eked out will be found in Herd's collection.

general demand for it as soon as it is properly known. And were the sale even slower than it promises to be, I should be somewhat compensated for my labor, by the pleasure I shall receive from the music. I cannot express how much I am obliged to you for the exquisite new songs you are sending me; but thanks, my friend, are a poor return for what you have done: as I will be benefited by the publication, you must suffer me to inclose a small mark of my gratitude,* and to repeat it afterwards when I find it convenient. Do not return it, for, by Heaven, if you do, our correspondence is at an end: and though this would be no loss to you, it would mar the publication, which under your auspices cannot fail to be respectable and interesting. . . .†

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

I THANK you for your delicate additional verses to the old fragment, and for your excellent song to "Logan Water;" Thomson's truly elegant one will follow for the English singer. Your apostrophe to statesmen is admirable; but I am not sure if it is quite suitable to the supposed gentle character of the fair mourner who speaks it. G. THOMSON.

([16]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

2nd July, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just finished the following ballad, and as I do think it in my best style, I send it you. Mr. Clarke, who wrote down the air from Mrs. Burns's wood-note wild, is very fond of it, and has given it a celebrity by teaching it to some young ladies of the first fashion here. If you do not like the air enough to give it a place in your collection, please return it. The song you may keep, as I remember it.

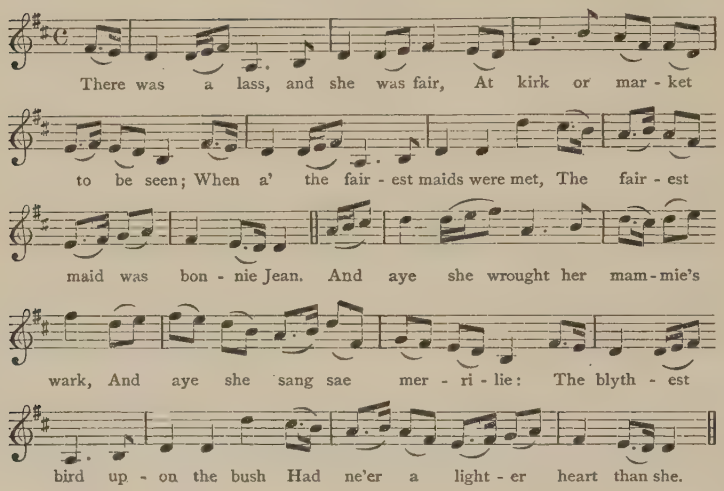
---

* A five pound bank note.

† Mr. Douglas makes a note to this letter, as follows: The last sentence of this letter suggests an *ex post facto* revisal of the letter by its arranger for press. Why assume that Burns would be disposed to return the money?

BONNIE JEAN.*

LIVELY. TUNE—"Bonnie Jean."


There was a lass, and she was fair, At kirk or mar - ket
to be seen; When a' the fair - est maids were met, The fair - est
maid was bon - nie Jean. And aye she wrought her mam - mie's
wark, And aye she sang sae mer - ri - lie: The blyth - est
bird up - on the bush Had ne'er a light - er heart than she.

(*See* page 167, Vol. IV.)

I have some thoughts of inserting in your index, or in my notes, the names of the fair ones, the themes of my songs. I do not mean the name at full; but dashes or asterisks, so as ingenuity may find them out.

The heroine of the foregoing is Miss M., daughter to Mr. M. of D., one of your subscribers. I have not painted her in the rank which she holds in life, but in the dress and character of a cottager. R. B.

([17]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

July, 1793.

I ASSURE you, my dear Sir, that you truly hurt me

* We think that no person of ordinary intelligence will dispute our assertion that, whatever Burns may have said about this song being written in compliment to Miss Jean M'Murdo,—his real source of inspiration was his "ain Jean;" and, were confirmation required, the fact of Mrs. Burns so enthusiastically lending her "wood notes wild" in giving it celebrity, as he records in his letter to Thomson, proves that she feared no rival in this instance.—G. G.

with your pecuniary parcel. It degrades me in my own eyes. However, to return it would savor of bombast affectation: but as to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear by that HONOR which crowns the upright statue of ROBERT BURNS'S INTEGRITY—on the least motion of it, I will indignantly spurn the by-past transaction, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you! BURNS'S character for generosity of sentiment and independence of mind will, I trust, long outlive any of his wants which the cold unfeeling ore can supply; at least, I will take care that such a character he shall deserve.

Thank you for my copy of your publication. Never did my eyes behold, in any musical work, such elegance and correctness. Your preface, too, is admirably written; only your partiality to me has made you say too much: however, it will bind me down to double every effort in the future progress of the work. Now for business. Must I return you the list? The following are a few remarks on the songs in the list you sent me. I never copy what I write to you, so I may be often tautological, or perhaps contradictory.

"The Flowers of the Forest" is charming as a poem, and should be, and must be, set to the notes; but, though out of your rule, the three stanzas, beginning,

"I ha'e seen the smiling o' fortune beguiling,"

are worthy of a place, were it but to immortalize the author of them, who is an old lady of my acquaintance, and at this moment living in Edinburgh. She is a Mrs. Cockburn; I forget of what place; but from Roxburghshire.* What a charming apostrophe is

"O fickle fortune, why this cruel sporting,
Why, why torment us—poor sons of a day!"

* A well-known Edinburgh beauty and poet, of Fairnalee in Roxburghshire.

The old ballad, "I wish I were where Helen lies," is silly to contemptibility.* My alteration of it in Johnson's is not much better. Mr. Pinkerton, in his, what he calls, ancient ballads (many of them notorious, though beautiful enough, forgeries), has the best set. It is full of his own interpolations; but no matter.

In the "Lea Rig" I have altered my mind as to the first line, and will, if you please, have it as at first—"When o'er the hills the eastern star." It is much more poetical.

The verses of the "Bonie Brucket Lassie" are poor. They, I believe, are the production of that odd being "Balloon Tytler." The air deserves fine verses.

The measure of "Hughie Graham" will answer exactly to my favorite fragment, "O, if my Love were yon red rose." Will the expression suit?

The Jacobite verses, "There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame," are mine, made on the idea suggested by the title of the air. If you object to their sentiments, there is another song of mine (*Museum*, Vol. IV. No. 331) which will suit the measure. It is a little irregular in the flow of the lines, but where two short syllables, that is to say, one syllable more than regular feet—if these two syllables fall to the space of one, crotchet time, composed of two different quavers under a slur; it has, I think, no bad effect to divide them. Thus it may flow

> Yon wild mossy mountains, &c.,
> That nurse, &c.,
> Where the grouse thro' the heath lead their coveys to feed,
> And the shepherd, &c.

After all, perhaps the expression of this air requires something more solemn.

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* "There is a copy of this ballad given in the account of the Parish of Kirkpatrick Fleeming (which contains the tomb of fair Helen Irvine), in the Statistics of Sir John Sinclair, vol. xiii., p. 275, to which this character is certainly not applicable."—CURRIE.

If you look into the *Museum*, Vol. IV. No. 311, you will see an altered set of the ballad, "O let me in this ae night." Apropos, in Oswald, under the name of "Will you lend me your loom, lass," you will meet with a different set, and perhaps a better one than in Johnson's *Museum*.

In my next I will suggest to your consideration a few songs which may have escaped your hurried notice. In the mean time, allow me to congratulate you now, as a brother of the quill. You have *committed* your character and fame; which will now be tried, for ages to come, by the illustrious jury of the SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF TASTE—all whom poesy can please, or music charm.

Being a bard of nature, I have some pretensions to second sight; and I am warranted by the spirit to foretell and affirm, that your great-grandchild will hold up your volumes, and say with honest pride, "This so much admired selection was the work of my ancestor." Yours, R. B.

P.S.—Robt. Riddell, Esq. of Glenriddell, subscribed to me for the songs; send him a copy to my care the first opportunity. Walter Riddell, of Woodley Park, is a subscriber for the whole work; but he is at present out of the country. John M'Murdo, Esq. of Drumlanrig, is, I believe, another subscriber for the whole work; and also, I think, Patrick Miller, of Dalswinton; but Mr. Clarke, our friend, who is at present teaching in both families—I will write or speak to him about it. However, all your subscribers here are determined to transmit you the full price without the intervention of those harpies, the booksellers.*

Do not forget Glenriddell's copy of the songs.

R. B.

* "This will be smiled at, I trust, by gods, men, and booksellers, all alike; but it shews at least the great good-will of Burns toward Mr. Thomson, and his anxiety to see his undertaking prove remunerative."—*R. Chambers.*

(9) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *1st August*, 1793.

DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of receiving your last two letters, and am happy to find you are quite pleased with the appearance of the first book. When you come to hear the songs sung and accompanied, you will be charmed with them.

"The bonnie brucket Lassie" certainly deserves better verses, and I hope you will match her. "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen," "Let me in this ae night," and several of the livelier airs, wait the muse's leisure. These are peculiarly worthy of her choice gifts: besides, you'll notice, that in airs of this sort the singer can always do greater justice to the poet, than in the slower airs of "The bush aboon Traquair," "Lord Gregory," and the like; for in the manner the latter were frequently sung, you must be contented with the sound, without the sense. Indeed both the airs and words are disguised by the very slow, languid, psalm-singing style in which they are too often performed: they lose animation and expression altogether, and instead of speaking to the mind, or touching the heart, they cloy upon the ear, and set us a yawning!

Your ballad, "There was a lass and she was fair," is simple and beautiful, and shall undoubtedly grace my collection.

G. T.

(18) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

MY DEAR THOMSON,—I hold the pen for our friend Clarke,* who at present is studying the music of the spheres at my elbow. The Georgium Sidus he thinks is rather out of tune; so until he rectify that matter, he cannot stoop to terrestrial affairs.

He sends you six of the Rondeau subjects, and if more are wanted, he says you shall have them. . . .

Damn your long stairs! S. CLARKE.

* Stephen Clarke, teacher and composer of music. He superintended the musical department of Johnson's *Museum*.

([19]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

YOUR objection, my dear Sir, to the passages in my song of "Logan Water," is right in one instance; the phrase "cruel joys" is there improper: but it is difficult to mend it: if I can I will. The other passage you object to does not appear in the same light to me.

The phrase "mammie's wark" universally among the peasantry, signifies "mother's work:" if you think this last better, you may adopt it. Your other objection to this song will vanish, when you consider that I have not painted Miss M'——— in the rank which she holds in life, but in the dress and character of a cottager; consequently the utmost simplicity of thought and expression was necessary.

Had you not better send me a list of the next parcel of songs which you intend to publish? As to the large list you sent me, it is so blurred and blotted that nobody besides myself could make any better of it.

I have looked over "There'll never be peace till Jamie," etc., but I cannot make any better of it.

I was yesternight in a composing humor, and behold the fruits of it:—

SONG—LET ME IN THIS AE NICHT.

[Here the poet transcribed a song of six stanzas, a little varied from the old song to be found in the collections of last century, but bearing no marks of his usual happy style of alteration. Neither Currie, nor Chambers have thought it worthy of putting into type; and we are of the same opinion.]

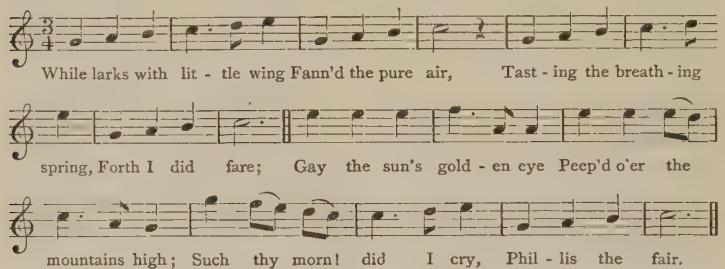
I need not hint to you that the chorus goes to the high part of the tune.

I likewise tried my hand on "Robin Adair," and

you will probably think, with little success; but it is such a damned, cramp, out-of-the-way measure, that I despair of doing any thing better to it.

PHILLIS THE FAIR.*

ANDANTE MODERATO. TUNE—"Robin Adair."


While larks with lit - tle wing Fann'd the pure air, Tast - ing the breath - ing
spring, Forth I did fare; Gay the sun's gold - en eye Peep'd o'er the
mountains high; Such thy morn! did I cry, Phil - lis the fair.

(*See* page 173, Vol. IV.)

So much for namby-pamby. I may, after all, try my hand on it in Scots verse. There I always find myself most at home.

I have just put the last hand to the song I meant for "Cauld kail in Aberdeen." If it suits you to insert it, I shall be pleased, as the heroine is a favorite of mine. If not, I shall also be pleased; because I wish, and will be glad, to see you act decidedly on the business. 'Tis a tribute as a man of taste, and as an editor, which you owe yourself.

Among your subscribers is, for the songs, the Honorable John Gordon of Kenmore; send his to my care. For the songs and sonatas both, Walter Riddell, Esq., of Woodley Park; send to the care of Mrs. Riddell, Dumfries. Yours, ROBT. BURNS.

* A tribute to Miss Phillis M'Murdo, written at the request of Mr. Stephen Clarke. She was a pupil of his, and he had a passion for her. She afterwards became Mrs. Lockhart of Carnwath, and died September 5, 1825.

([10]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

August, 1792.

My Good Sir,—I consider it one of the most agreeable circumstances attending this publication of mine, that it has procured me so many of your much-valued epistles. Pray make my acknowledgments to St. Stephen for the tunes; tell him I admit the justness of his complaint on my stair-case, conveyed in his laconic postscript to your *jeu d'esprit*, which I perused more than once, without discovering exactly whether your discussion was music, astronomy, or politics; though a sagacious friend, acquainted with the convivial habits of the poet and the musician, offered me a bet of two to one, you were just drowning care together; that an empty bowl was the only thing that would deeply affect you, and the only matter you could then study how to remedy!

I shall be glad to see you give "Robin Adair" a Scottish dress. Peter is furnishing him with an English suit for a change, and you are well matched together. Robin's air is excellent, though he certainly has an out-of-the-way measure as ever poor Parnassian wight was plagued with. I wish you would invoke the muse for a single elegant stanza to be substituted for the concluding objectionable verses of "Down the burn, Davie," so that this most exquisite song may no longer be excluded from good company.

Mr. Allan has made an inimitable drawing from your "John Anderson, my Jo," which I am to have engraved as a frontispiece to the humorous class of songs; you will be quite charmed with it, I promise you. The old couple are seated by the fireside.* Mrs. Anderson in great good humor is clapping John's shoulders, while he smiles and looks at her with such glee, as to show that he fully recollects the pleasant days and nights when they were "first acquent." The drawing would do honor to the pencil of Teniers.†

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* John Anderson does not appear by the correspondence to have been given to Thomson.

† Allan was born in 1744 in Alloa, and was for many years master and director of the academy established by the Board of Trustees at Edinburgh for manufactures and improvements. He illustrated "The Gentle Shepherd," and left a series of sketches designed for the poems of Burns. He died on the 6th August, 1796, just a fortnight after the poet. Allan's picture of "John Anderson" is now considered very poor.—G. G.

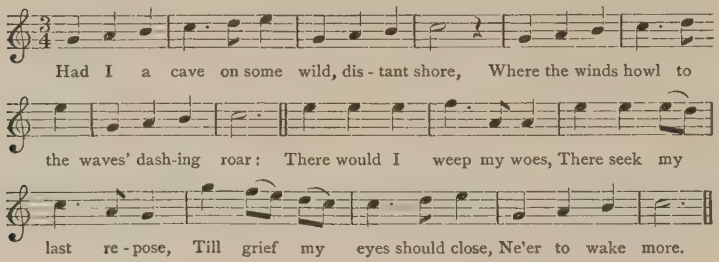
([20]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

THAT crinkum-crankum tune, "Robin Adair," has run so in my head, and I succeeded so ill in my last attempt, that I have ventured in this morning's walk one essay more. You, my dear Sir, will remember an unfortunate part of our worthy friend Cunningham's story, which happened about three years ago. That struck my fancy, and I endeavored to do the idea justice as follows :—

HAD I A CAVE.

ANDANTE MODERATO. TUNE—"Robin Adair."


Had I a cave on some wild, dis - tant shore, Where the winds howl to
the waves' dash-ing roar: There would I weep my woes, There seek my
last re - pose, Till grief my eyes should close, Ne'er to wake more.

Falsest of womankind,
Canst thou declare
All thy fond-plighted vows
Fleeting as air?
To thy new lover hie,
Laugh o'er thy perjury,
Then in thy bosom try
What peace is there!

(*See* page 174, Vol. IV.)

By the way, I have met with a musical Highlander in Breadalbane's Fencibles, which are quartered here, who assures me that he well remembers his mother singing Gaelic songs to both "Robin Adair" and "Gramachree." They certainly have more of the Scotch than Irish taste in them.

This man comes from the vicinity of Inverness: so

it could not be any intercourse with Ireland that could bring them; except, what I shrewdly suspect to be the case, the wandering minstrels, harpers, and pipers used to go frequently errant through the wilds both of Scotland and Ireland, and so some favorite airs might be common to both. A case in point—they have lately in Ireland published an Irish air, as they say, called "Caun du delish." The fact is, in a publication of Corri's a great while ago you will find the same air, called a Highland one, with a Gaelic song set to it. Its name there, I think, is "Oran Gaoil," and a fine air it is. Do ask honest Allan, or the Rev. Gaelic parson,* about these matters.

Ever yours, ROBERT BURNS.

([21]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,—"Let me in this ae night" I will reconsider. I am glad that you are pleased with my song, "Had I a cave," &c., as I liked it myself.

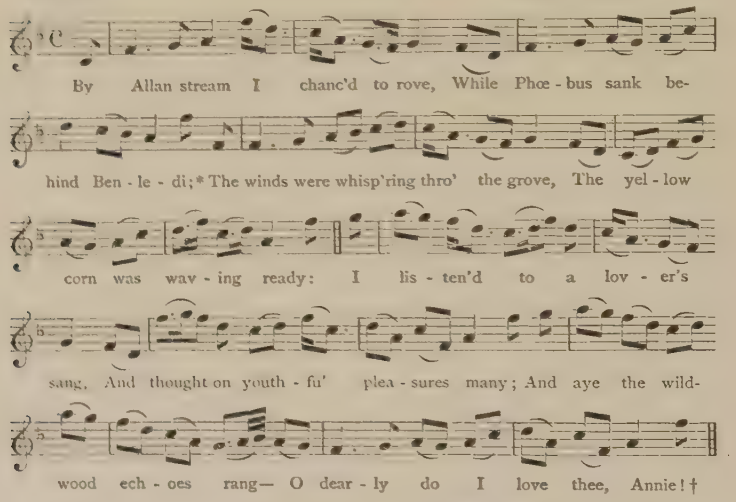
I walked out yesterday evening with a volume of the Museum in my hand, when, turning up "Allan Water," "What numbers shall the muse repeat," &c., as the words appeared to me rather unworthy of so fine an air, and recollecting that it is on your list, I sat and raved under the shade of an old thorn, till I wrote one to suit the measure. I may be wrong; but I think it not in my worst style. You must know that in Ramsay's Tea-table, where the modern song first appeared, the ancient name of the tune, Allan says, is "Allan Water," or "My love Annie's very bonnie." This last has certainly been a line of the

* The Rev. Joseph Robertson Macgregor, the first minister of the first Gaelic chapel in Edinburgh, which was erected on the Castle-hill in 1769. He died in 1801.

original song: so I took up the idea, and, as you will see, have introduced the line in its place, which I presume it formerly occupied: though I likewise give you a choosing line, if it should not hit the cut of your fancy:—

ALLAN WATER.

ANDANTE. TUNE—"Allan Water."


By Allan stream I chanc'd to rove, While Phœ - bus sank be-
hind Ben - le - di;* The winds were whisp'ring thro' the grove, The yel - low
corn was wav - ing ready: I lis - ten'd to a lov - er's
sang, And thought on youth - fu' plea - sures many; And aye the wild-
wood ech - oes rang— O dear - ly do I love thee, Annie!†

(*See* page 175, Vol. IV.)

Bravo! say I; it is a good song. Should you think so too, not else, you can set the music to it, and let the other follow as English verses.

I cannot touch "Down the burn, Davie."

Autumn is my propitious season. I make more verses in it than all the year else.

God bless you! R. B.

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* A mountain west of Strath-Allan, 3009 feet high.—*R. B.*

† Or, "O my love Annie's very bonnie."—*R. B.*

(11) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

(Douglas, 1877.)*

Edinburgh, 20*th August* 1793.

Bravissimo! I say. It *is* an excellent song. There is not a single line that could be altered. Of the two lines—"O my love Annie's very bonie!" and "O dearly do I love thee, Annie!" I prefer the latter decidedly. Till I received this song, I had half resolved not to include *Allan Water* in the collection, and for this reason, that it bears such a near resemblance to a much finer air—at least, a greater favorite of mine—*Galashiels*, or "Ah, the poor shepherd's mournful fate;" the beginning is almost quite the same.

I have made up a correct list of my 100 airs, of which I shall send you a copy in the course of a few weeks. It is my fixed intention not to exceed that number; by going farther, I should only be induced to take a number of trifling airs, and so swell both the size and price of the book beyond bounds. And I find my list contains every fine air that is known of the serious and pastoral kind, besides two or three never before published—all diamonds of the water.

I stand pledged to furnish English verses along with every Scottish song, and I must fulfil what I have promised; but I certainly have got into a scrape if you do not stand my friend. A couple of stanzas to each air will do as well as half a dozen; and to an imagination so infinitely fruitful as yours this will not be a Herculean labor. The airs too are all so perfectly familiar to you, and the original verses so much your favorites, that no poet living is qualified to add congenial stanzas, even in English, so much as you are.

I am very glad that you are to revise "Let me in this ae night." I put a much greater value upon this beautiful air than either "Allan Water," or "Logan Water." So it is also with "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen;" I have always considered it among the most pleasing of our melodies. When you first sent me "O Poortith cauld," I took the liberty to observe that I thought it too querulous and despondent for the air. I would

* The holograph is possessed by Mr. Paterson, Publisher, Edinburgh. It is the solitary specimen of Thomson's letters to our poet that is known to exist; and its preservation can be accounted for only on the ground that it had fallen aside from the rest of the series, and was not returned to Thomson with the others after the death of Burns. It formed one of a parcel of MSS. connected with the poet's matters, which at one time were in the hands of Dr. Maxwell, Dumfries.

very fain have something in your best manner for it. There is not an air existing better calculated for telling a pretty tale of love; and therefore I hope that in this propitious season you will think of it some evening under the Thorn tree that witnessed the birth of your *Allan Water*. Remember also, when the Muse and you are "in fit retreats for wooing," that fine ballad-tune, "Laddie, lie near me."

I am sorry you cannot think of furnishing a sweet concluding stanza or two for "Down the burn, Davie;" you will surely allow that however pleasing the description beginning "Till baith at length impatient grown," it is altogether improper for publication; more particularly in a collection that assumes to itself the merit of purification.

I have sent by the Dumfries carrier (carriage paid) a parcel addressed to you containing a set of the Sonatas and Songs for Mr. Riddell of Woodley Park; the same for a Mr. Boyd who wrote some weeks ago to Mr. Hill about them; a set of the songs to Mr. Gordon, and a set of both for our friend Mr. Clarke. Will you give these to a porter (I mean the two first-named) and send the others at your convenience.

Yours cordially, G. THOMSON.

P.S.—I think as you do, that "Oran-gaoil" is a beautiful tune. I have put it in my list, and propose attaching it to Dr. Blacklock's verses, "Since robb'd of all my soul holds dear."

(22) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

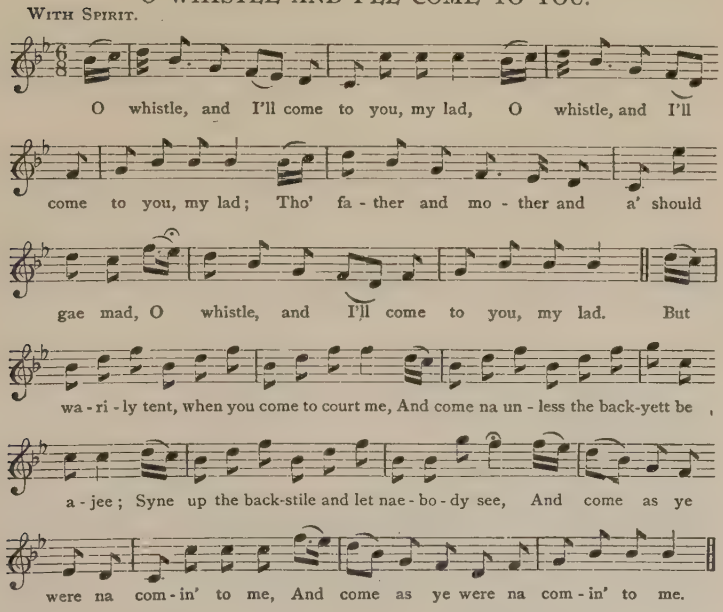
August, 1793.

YOU may readily trust, my dear Sir, that any exertion in my power is heartily at your service. But one thing I must hint to you: the very name of Peter Pindar is of great service to your publication; so get a verse from him now and then, though I have no objection, as well as I can, to bear the burden of the business.

Is "Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad," one of your airs? I admire it much; and yesterday I set the following verses to it. Urbani, whom I have met with here, begged them of me, as he admires the air

much; but as I understand that he looks with rather an evil eye on your work, I did not choose to comply. However, if the song does not suit your taste, I may possibly send it him. He is, *entre nous*, a narrow, conceited creature; but he sings so delightfully, that whatever he introduces at your concert must have immediate celebrity. The set of the air which I had in my eye is in Johnson's *Museum*, No. 106.

O WHISTLE AND I'LL COME TO YOU.

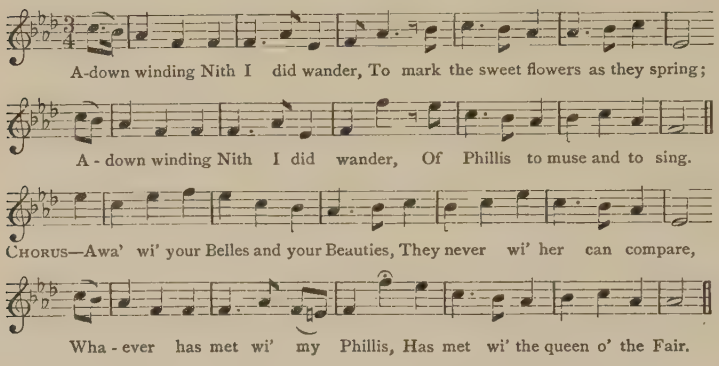

With Spirit.
O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad, O whistle, and I'll
come to you, my lad; Tho' fa - ther and mo - ther and a' should
gae mad, O whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad. But
wa - ri - ly tent, when you come to court me, And come na un - less the back-yett be
a - jee; Syne up the back-stile and let nae - bo - dy see, And come as ye
were na com - in' to me, And come as ye were na com - in' to me.

(*See* page 177, Vol. IV.)

Another favorite air of mine is, "The muckin' o' Geordie's byre." When sung slow with expression, I have wished that it had had better poetry: that, I have endeavored to supply as follows:—

PHILLIS, THE QUEEN O' THE FAIR.

ANDANTE. TUNE—"The Mucking o' Geordie's Byre."


A-down winding Nith I did wander, To mark the sweet flowers as they spring;
A - down winding Nith I did wander, Of Phillis to muse and to sing.
CHORUS—Awa' wi' your Belles and your Beauties, They never wi' her can compare,
Wha - ever has met wi' my Phillis, Has met wi' the queen o' the Fair.

(*See* page 178, Vol. IV.)

Mr. Clarke begs you to give Miss Phillis a corner in your book, as she is a particular flame of his. She is a Miss P. M.,* sister to "Bonnie Jean." They are both pupils of his. You shall hear from me, the very first grist I get from my rhyming-mill.

([23]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[28] *August*, 1793.

THAT tune, "Cauld Kail," is such a favorite of yours, that I once more roved out yesterevening for a gloamin'-shot at the muses;† when the muse that presides o'er the shores of Nith, or rather my old inspiring dearest nymph, Coila, whispered me the

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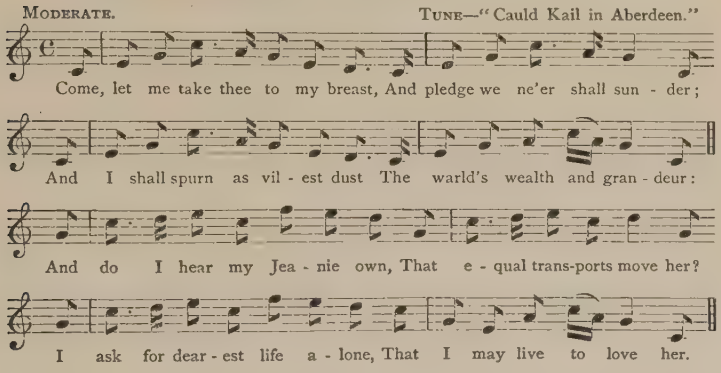
* Phillis M'Murdo. See before. The original MS. contained the following additional stanza, which for some reason was deleted:—

"The primrose is o'er for the season,
But mark where the violet is blown;
How modest it peeps from the covert,
So Modesty sure is her own!"

† "'Gloamin'—twilight, probably from glooming. A beautiful poetic word, which ought to be adopted in England. A gloamin'-shot, a twilight interview."—CURRIE.

following. I have two reasons for thinking that it was my early, sweet, simple inspirer that was by my elbow, "smooth gliding without step," and pouring the song on my glowing fancy. In the first place, since I left Coila's native haunts, not a fragment of a poet has arisen to cheer her solitary musings, by catching inspiration from her; so I more than suspect that she has followed me hither, or at least makes me occasional visits; secondly, the last stanza of this song I send you is the very words that Coila taught me many years ago, and which I set to an old Scots reel in Johnson's *Museum*.

COME, LET ME TAKE THEE TO MY BREAST.


Moderate.
Tune—"Cauld Kail in Aberdeen."
Come, let me take thee to my breast, And pledge we ne'er shall sun - der;
And I shall spurn as vil - est dust The warld's wealth and gran - deur:
And do I hear my Jea - nie own, That e - qual trans-ports move her?
I ask for dear - est life a - lone, That I may live to love her.

(*See* page 180, Vol. IV.)

If you think the above will suit your idea of your favorite air, I shall be highly pleased. "The last time I came o'er the moor" I cannot meddle with, as to mending it; and the musical world have been so long accustomed to Ramsay's words, that a different song, though positively superior, would not be so well received. I am not fond of choruses to songs, so I have not made one for the foregoing.

Apropos, there is a song of mine in the 3d vol. of the *Museum* which would suit "Dainty Davie." Tell

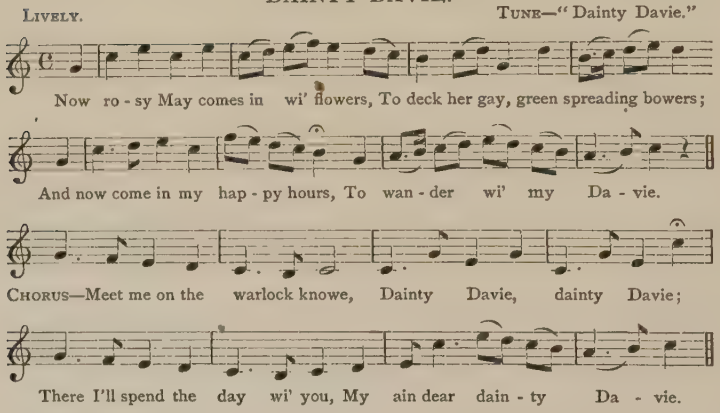
me how it will suit. It begins, "O were I on Parnassus Hill."

Let me have the list of your first hundred songs as soon as possible. I am ever, my dear Sir, yours sincerely, ROBT. BURNS.

([24]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[28] *August*, 1793.

DAINTY DAVIE.


LIVELY.
TUNE—"Dainty Davie."
Now ro - sy May comes in wi' flowers, To deck her gay, green spreading bowers;
And now come in my hap - py hours, To wan - der wi' my Da - vie.
CHORUS—Meet me on the warlock knowe, Dainty Davie, dainty Davie;
There I'll spend the day wi' you, My ain dear dain - ty Da - vie.

(*See* page 181, Vol. IV.)

MY DEAR SIR,—I have written you already by today's post, where I hinted at a song of mine which might suit "Dainty Davie." I have been looking over another and a better song of mine in the *Museum*, which I have altered as follows, and which I am persuaded will please you. The words "Dainty Davie" glide so sweetly in the air that, to a Scots ear, any song to it, without *Davie* being the hero, would have a lame effect.

So much for Davie. The chorus, you know, is to the low part of the tune. See Clarke's set of it in the *Museum*. Yours, R. B.

N.B.—In the *Museum* they have drawled out the tune to twelve lines of poetry, which is d——d nonsense. Four lines of song, and four of chorus, is the way.

([12]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *1st Sept.*, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,—Since writing you last, I have received half a dozen songs, with which I am delighted beyond expression. The humor and fancy of "Whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad," will render it nearly as great a favorite as "Duncan Gray." "Come, let me take thee to my breast," "Adown winding Nith," and "By Allan stream," &c., are full of imagination and feeling, and sweetly suit the airs for which they are intended. "Had I a cave on some wild distant shore," is a striking and affecting composition. Our friend, to whose story it refers, read it with a swelling heart, I assure you. The union we are now forming, I think, can never be broken; these songs of yours will descend with the music to the latest posterity, and will be fondly cherished so long as genius, taste, and sensibility exist in our island.

While the muse seems so propitious, I think it right to inclose a list of all the favors I have to ask of her—no fewer than twenty and three! I have burdened the pleasant Peter with as many as it is probable he will attend to: most of the remaining airs would puzzle the English poet not a little; they are of that peculiar measure and rhythm, that they must be familiar to him who writes for them. G. T.

([25]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[In the poet's letter, No. 23 of this correspondence, he concludes with the request, "Let me have the list of your first hundred songs as soon as possible." The present ponderous letter is undated—indeed the writing of it must have required many sittings; but as Thomson acknowledges receipt of it in his letter of 12th September, while the correspondents are in the heart of their controversy about the alterations on "Bruce's Address to his Troops," we now introduce it, rather than let it interrupt that discussion.]

I HAVE received your list, my dear Sir, and here go my observations on it :—

No. 1. "An thou wert my ain." I have not Pinkerton, but before me is Witherspoon's first vol. (entitled "Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs and Heroic Ballads"). I have three songs to this air, and with the same chorus :—

1st.—"Of race divine thou needs must be."
2nd.—"Like bees that suck the morning dew."
3rd.—"As round the elm th' enamor'd vine."

Of these, all of them good, the first, in my opinion, is the best. The English song, "Ah, dear Marcella," &c., is not in my copy of "The Charmer."

No. 2. "Down the burn, Davie." I have this moment tried an alteration, leaving out the last half of the third stanza, and the first half of the last stanza, thus :—

As down the burn they took their way,
And thro' the flowery dale;
His cheeks to hers he aft did lay,
And love was ay the tale.
With "Mary, when shall we return,
Sic pleasure to renew?"
Quoth Mary, "Love, I like the burn,
And ay shall follow you."

No. 3. Nothing to remark.

No. 4. "Katherine Ogie." I should like to see this in your next number.

No. 5. "Low down in the Broom," in my opinion, deserves more properly a place among your lively and humorous songs. I shall by and by point out some in this last list which rather belong to the first.

No. 6. "Lewie Gordon." Jamie Dawson is a beautiful ballad, but is of great length; cannot you, for sake of economy in the press-work, substitute a short one?

No. 7. Nothing.

No. 8. "Cowden-Knowes." Remember, in your index, that the song is pure English, beginning, "When summer comes, the swains on Tweed," is the production of Crawford. Robert was his Christian name.

Nos. 9 and 10. Nothing.

No. 11. "Bonie Dundee." Your objection of the stiff line is just; but mending my coloring would spoil the likeness; so the picture must stand as it is [see page 148, Vol. IV., "True-hearted was he"].

No. 12. "The last time I cam o'er the moor." Why encumber yourself with another English song to this tune? Ramsay's is English already to your hand.

No. 13. "Flowers of the Forest." The verses, "I've seen the smiling," &c., with a few trifling alterations, putting "no more" for "nae mair," and the word "turbid" in a note at the bottom of the page, to shew the meaning of the word "drumly," the song will serve you for an English set. A small sprinkling of Scotticisms is no objection to an English reader.

No. 14. Nothing, except that "Despairing beside a clear stream," is a very popular song to its own tune. Would it not be better to have another in the same measure (there are plenty of them) which has never been set to music?

No. 15. Nothing.

No. 16. "Thro' the Wood, Laddie." I am decidedly of opinion that both in this, and "There'll never be peace till Jamie come hame," the second, or high part of the tune (being a repetition of the first part, an octave higher), is only for instrumental music, and would be much better omitted in singing.

No. 17. "Lord Gregory." Please insert mine in your next number; two or three copies of the song have got into the world, and I am afraid lest they find their way to some pilferers.

No. 18. "Thou art gane awa frae me, Mary." See the best set of this song in the *Museum*.

Nos. 19, 20, 21. Nothing.

No. 22. "Peggy, I must love thee." Please let me take this into consideration. It will do for your third number.

No. 24. "Logan Water," shall wait my revisal; only one passage I think faulty. "Cruel joys" is a d—d stupid expression. Nos. 25, 26, 27. Nothing.

No. 28. "My lodging is on the cold ground." Please let it wait your third number to gain time.

Nos. 29, 30. Nothing.

No. 31. "Fair Helen" is not an air that charms me.

No. 32. "Bonie Jean," nothing.*

No. 33. "Bonie Jean," the second. Change the name to "There was a Lass, and she was fair," which, by the by, is the old name of the air. Do make a point of publishing this song to its own tune, and in your next number, you will oblige me by it.† Please likewise insert No. 11 (Bonie Dundee) in your next number.

No. 34. "Gil Morrice," I am unalterably for leaving out altogether. It is a plaguey length, which will put you to great press expense, the air itself is never sung; and its place can be well supplied with one of two fine songs which are not at all in your list, "Craigieburn Wood," and "Roy's Wife." The first, besides its intrinsic merit, has novelty; and the last has high merit as well as great celebrity; of the last I have the original, set as well as written by the lady who composed it, and it is superior to any edition of the song which the public has yet seen.‡

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* This is a song by Ramsay set to a melody (No. 54 of Johnson) called "Bonie Jean of Aberdeen."

† As elsewhere noted, it is to be regretted that Thomson, instead of adopting this now lost melody so highly recommended by Burns, threw it aside, and set the words to the air, "Willie was a wanton wag."

‡ This original MS. of the authoress, Mrs. Grant of Carron, has strayed somewhere. It is said to have contained a closing verse, thus:—

"But Roy's years are three times mine, I'm sure his days'll no be mony;
An when the carle's dead an gane, she'll maybe rew an tak her Johnny."

No. 35. Nothing.

No. 36. Is the real tune of "Hughie Graham," as sung in some places; in others it is sung to a different and very pleasing little air, yet unknown to the world. I neglected to take down the notes when I met with it, and now it is out of my power. This air you will find in Oswald's Collection, Book 8th, under the title "Drimen Duff."

No. 37. "Laddie, lie near me," must *lie by me* for some time. I do not know the air; and until I am complete master of a tune, in my own singing (such as it is), I never can compose for it. My way is: I consider the poetic sentiment correspondent to my idea of the musical expression; then choose my theme; begin one stanza; when that is composed, which is generally the most difficult part of the business, I walk out, sit down now and then, look out for subjects in nature around me that are in unison and harmony with the cogitations of my fancy and workings of my bosom; humming every now and then the air with the verses I have framed. When I feel my Muse beginning to jade, I retire to the solitary fireside of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper; swinging at intervals on the hind-legs of my elbow-chair, by way of calling forth my own critical strictures, as my pen goes on. Seriously, this, at home, is almost invariably my way. What damn'd egotism!

No. 38. Nothing.

No. 39. "Highland Laddie." The old set will please a mere Scots ear best; and the new an Italianised one. There is a third, and what Oswald calls "The Old Highland Laddie," which pleases me more than either of them: it is sometimes called "Jinglin Johnie;" that being the air of an old humorous bawdy song of that name—you will find it in the *Museum*, "I hae been at Crookieden," &c. I would

advise you, in this musical quandary, to offer up your prayers to the Muses for inspiring direction; and, in the meantime, waiting for this direction, bestow a libation to Bacchus; and there is not a doubt but you will hit on a judicious choice. *Probatum est.*

No. 40. Nothing.

No. 41. "O bonie Lass, will ye lie in a Barrack," must infallibly have Scots verses.

No. 42. Unknown.

No. 43. "Wae's my heart that we should sunder." Do you know a song in the *Museum*, "Go fetch to me a pint o' wine, and fill it in a silver tassie?" It is a song of mine, and I think not a bad one. It precisely suits the measure of this air;* you might set it to this, and for an English song, take either, "With broken words," &c., or "Speak on, speak thus," &c.: this last is the best; but remember I am no Dictator: *ad libitum* is the word.

No. 44 to 50. Nothing.

No. 51. "The bonie Brucket Lassie." I enclose you a song to it, as I think it should be set, and with a better effect than the modulation in the *Museum*, where it first appeared, and whence everybody else has borrowed it. The tune is a very early acquaintance of mine. The verses, if they deserve the name (in the *Museum*), are the work of a gentleman known by the name of "Balloon Tytler."

No. 52. Nothing.

No. 53. "Banks of the Dee." Leave it out entirely; 'tis rank Irish; every other Irish air you have adopted is in the Scots taste; but, Langolee!—why, it is no more like a Scots air than Lunardi's balloon is like Diogenes' tub. I grant you that it is pretty; but why don't you take also the "Humors of Glen,"

* No. 131 of Johnson. The air is given in Thomson's collection to Ramsay's song, "With broken words," &c. It therefore appears that Burns was not quite satisfied with the melody [No. 231 of Johnson] to "The silver tassie." See page 26, Vol. III. of this edition.

"Captain O'Kean," "Coolim," and many other Irish airs much more beautiful than it? Let me recommend to you, in place of this blackguard Irish jig, our beautiful Scots air, "Saw ye na my Peggy," a tune worth ten thousand of it; or, "Fy! let us a' to the Bridal," worth twenty thousand of it.

No. 54. Nothing.

No. 55. "White Cockade." I have forgot the Cantata you allude to, as I kept no copy, and indeed did not know that it was in existence; however, I remember that none of the songs pleased myself, except the last—something about:—

> Courts for cowards were erected,
> Churches built to please their priests.*

But there is another song of mine, a composition of early life, in the *Museum*, beginning:—

> Nae gentle dames, tho' e'er sae fair,

which suits the measure, and has tolerable merit.

No. 56. It suits best to make it, "Whistle, and I'll come t' ye, my lad."

No. 57. "Auld Sir Symon" I must beg you to keep out, and put in its place "The Quaker's Wife."

No. 58. Nothing.

No. 59. "Dainty Davie" I have heard sung nineteen thousand, nine hundred, and ninety-nine times, and always with the chorus to the low part of the tune; and nothing (since a Highland wench in the Cowgate once bore me three bastards at a birth) has surprised me so much as your opinion on this subject. If it will not suit as I proposed, we will lay two

* The reader will recollect that the poet gave his only MS. of the *Jolly Beggars* to the Laird of Craigengillan's factor. After being shown about in Edinburgh for some time, it was acquired by Mr. Thomas Stewart, printer, Glasgow, who published it in 1799, and again, in 1823, in *fac-simile*. The valuable holograph is now the property of the poet's nephew, Mr. Gilbert Burns of Knockmaroon Lodge, Dublin.

of the stanzas together, and then make the chorus follow.

No. 60. "Fee him, father, fee him." I enclose you Fraser's set of this tune; when he plays it slow, in fact he makes it the language of despair. I shall here give you two stanzas in that style, merely to try if it will be any improvement. Were it possible, in singing, to give it half the pathos which Fraser gives it in playing, it would make an admirably pathetic song. I do not give these verses for any merit they have. I composed them at the time in which "Patie Allan's mither de'ed—that was about the back o' midnight," and by the lee-side of a bowl of punch, which had overset every mortal in company except the *Hautbois* and the Muse.

THOU HAST LEFT ME EVER.

Tune—"Fee him, Father."

Thou hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever;
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie,
Thou hast left me ever:
Aften thou hast vow'd that death
Only should us sever;
Now thou'st left thy lass for ay—
I maun see thee never, Jamie,
I'll see thee never, &c.

(*See* p. 187, Vol. IV.)

No. 61. "Jocky said to Jenny" I would discard, and in its place would put "There's nae Luck about the House," which is a very pleasant air, and positively the finest love-ballad in that style in the Scots, or perhaps any other language. "When she cam ben, she bobbit," is a more beautiful air by much than either of them, and in the *andante* way, would make a charming sentimental ballad.

No. 62. Nothing.

No. 63. "Maggie Lauder" is a good tune; but there is—I don't know what, of vulgarism about it; at least to me it has always that effect. There is an English song to which it is set in the *Museum* (No. 98).

Nos. 64, 65, and 66. Nothing.

No. 67. "Saw ye my Father?" is one of my greatest favorites. The evening before last, I wandered out, and began a tender song, in what I think is its native style. I must premise, that the old way, and the way to give most effect, is to have no starting-note, as the fiddlers call it, but to burst at once into the pathos. Every country girl sings, "Saw ye my Father?" &c. So also in line third, "*I* saw not your," &c. This last, to be sure, hurts the poetry ("*I* saw," instead of "I *saw*"), but I am speaking of the air.

My song is but just begun; and I should like, before I proceed, to know your opinion of it. I have sprinkled it with the Scots dialect, but it may be easily turned into correct English.

FRAGMENT.

Tune—"Saw ye my Father?"

Where are the joys I hae met in the morning,
That danc'd to the lark's early sang?
Where is the peace that awaited my wand'ring,
At e'enin the wild woods amang?

Nae mair a-winding the course o' yon river,
And making sweet flowerets sae fair;
Nae mair I trace the light footsteps o' Pleasure,
But Sorrow and sad-sighing Care.

Is it that Simmer's forsaken our vallies,
And grim, surly Winter is near?
No, no, the bees humming round the gay roses
Proclaim it the pride o' the year.

Fain wad I hide what I fear to discover,
Yet lang, lang too well hae I known
A' that has caus-ed the wreck in my bosom
Is—Jenny, fair Jenny alone.

Cetera desunt.

No. 68. Nothing.

No. 69. "Todlin Hame." Urbani mentioned an idea of his, which has long been mine, that this air is highly susceptible of pathos; accordingly, you will soon hear him at your concert try it to a song of mine in the *Museum*, "Ye Banks and Braes o' bonie Doon." Clarke has told me what a creature he is; but if he will bring any more of our tunes from darkness into light, I will be pleased.

No. 70. Nothing.

No. 71. "Geordie's Byre." Call the tune so, for decency's sake. I agree with you that the song will be better to want the stanza, "The primrose is o'er for the season." I'll rather write a new song altogether than make this English. The sprinkling of Scotch in it, while it is but a sprinkling, gives it an air of rustic *naïveté* which time will rather increase than diminish.

Nos. 72, 73. Nothing.

No. 74, and last. "Tranent Muir" I am altogether averse to. The song is fine and eke the tune; but it is not of a piece with the rest of your pieces. Instead of it, allow me to mention a particular favorite of mine which you will find in the *Museum:* "I had a horse, and I had nae mair." It is a charming song, and I know the story of the ballad. One song more, and I have done—"Auld Lang Syne." The air is but mediocre; but the following song—the old song of the olden times, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing, is enough to recommend any air:

AULD LANG SYNE.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?

Chorus—For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne, &c.

(*See* page 24, Vol. III.)

Now, I suppose, I have tired your patience fairly. You must, after all is over, have a number of ballads, properly so called. Gil Morrice, Tranent Muir, M'Pherson's Farewell, Battle of Sheriffmuir, or "We ran and they ran" (I know the author of this charming ballad, and his history), Hardiknute, Barbara Allan (I can furnish a finer set of this tune than any that has yet appeared);* and besides, do you know that I really have the old tune to which "The Cherry and the Slae" was sung, and which is mentioned as a well-known air in "Scotland's Complaint"—a book published before poor Mary's days? It was then called "The Banks of Helicon;" an old poem which Pinkerton has brought to light. You will see all this in Tytler's "History of Scots Music." The tune, to a learned ear, may have no great merit; but it is a great curiosity. I have a good many original things of this kind.

Good bye to ye! R. B.

* Thomson's set of this melody is the same as Johnson's, published in 1790. The English set of the air, in Ritson, is very inferior.

([26]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

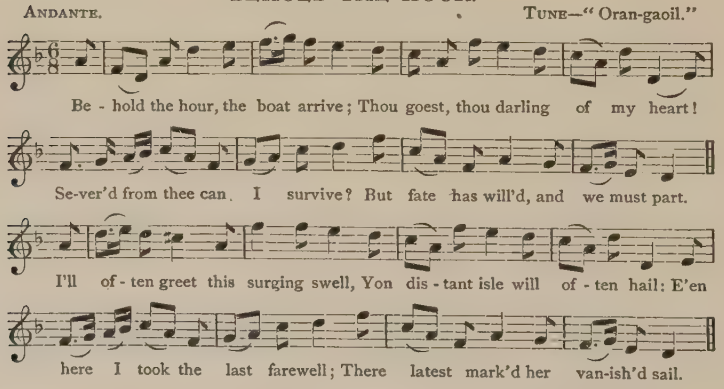
September, 1793.

I DARE say, my dear Sir, that you will begin to think my correspondence is persecution. No matter, I can't help it; a ballad is my hobby-horse; which, though otherwise a simple sort of harmless idiotical beast enough, has yet this blessed headstrong property, that when once it has fairly made off with a hapless wight, it gets so enamored with the tinkle-gingle, tinkle-gingle of its own bells, that it is sure to run poor pilgarlić, the bedlam-jockey, quite beyond any useful point or post in the common race of man.

The following song I have composed for "Oran-gaoil," the Highland air that, you tell me in your last, you have resolved to give a place to in your book. I have this moment finished the song, so you have it glowing from the mint. If it suit you, well!—if not, 'tis also well!

BEHOLD THE HOUR.*

ANDANTE. TUNE—"Oran-gaoil."


Be - hold the hour, the boat arrive; Thou goest, thou darling of my heart!
Se-ver'd from thee can I survive? But fate has will'd, and we must part.
I'll of - ten greet this surging swell, Yon dis - tant isle will of - ten hail: E'en
here I took the last farewell; There latest mark'd her van-ish'd sail.

(*See* page 185, Vol. IV.)

* Clarinda inspired these verses. She was going to the West Indies.

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Bruce's Address to his Army

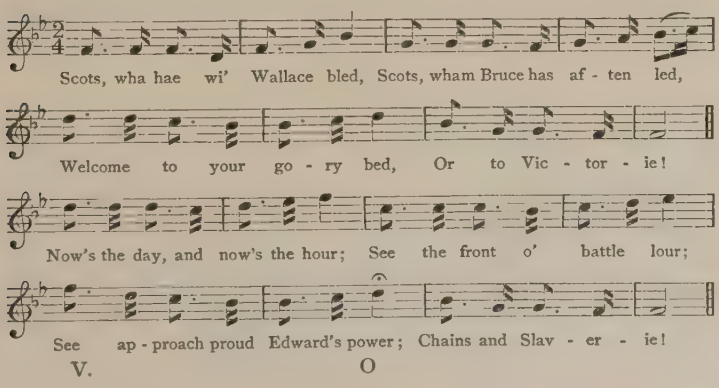
([27]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September 1st, 1793.

You know that my pretensions to musical taste are merely a few of nature's instincts, untaught and untutored by art. For this reason, many musical compositions, particularly where much of the merit lies in counterpoint, however they may transport and ravish the ears of you connoisseurs, affect my simple lug no otherwise than merely as melodious din. On the other hand, by way of amends, I am delighted with many little melodies which the learned musician despises as silly and insipid. I do not know whether the old air, "Hey, tuttie taitie," may rank among this number; but well I know that, with Frazer's hautboy, it has often filled my eyes with tears. There is a tradition, which I have met with in many places in Scotland, that it was Robert Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn. This thought, in my yesternight's evening walk, warmed me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of liberty and independence, which I threw into a kind of Scottish ode, fitted to the air, that one might suppose to be the gallant Royal Scot's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning.

BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY AT BANNOCKBURN.

Boldly. Tune—"Hey, Tuttie Taitie."


Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled, Scots, wham Bruce has af - ten led,
Welcome to your go - ry bed, Or to Vic - tor - ie!
Now's the day, and now's the hour; See the front o' battle lour;
See ap - proach proud Edward's power; Chains and Slav - er - ie!

V. O

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty 's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

So may God ever defend the cause of truth and liberty, as he did that day! Amen.* R. B.

P.S.—I showed the air to Urbani, who was highly pleased with it, and begged me to make soft verses for it; but I had no idea of giving myself any trouble on the subject, till the accidental recollection of that glorious struggle for freedom, associated with the glowing ideas of some other struggles of the same nature, not quite so ancient, roused my rhyming mania. Clarke's set of the tune, with his bass, you will find in the Museum; though I am afraid that the air is not what will entitle it to a place in your elegant selection. R. B.

* "That Burns, however untaught, was yet in ear and feeling a musician, is clear from the skill with which he adapts his verse to the structure and character of each different strain. Still more strikingly did he prove his fitness for this peculiar task by the sort of instinct with which, in more than one instance, he discerned the real and innate sentiment which an air was calculated to convey, though always before associated with words expressing a totally different feeling. Thus, the air of a ludicrous old song, "Fee him, father, fee him," has been made the medium of one of Burns's most pathetic effusions; while still more marvelously, "Hey, tuttie taitie," has been elevated by him into that heroic, strain, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled," a song which, in a great national crisis, would be of more avail than all the eloquence of Demosthenes." —*Thomas Moore.*

([13]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *5th September*, 1793.

I BELIEVE it is generally allowed that the greatest modesty is the sure attendant of the greatest merit. While you are sending me verses that even Shakspeare might be proud to own, you speak of them as if they were ordinary productions! Your heroic ode is to me the noblest composition of the kind in the Scottish language. I happened to dine yesterday with a party of your friends, to whom I read it. They were all charmed with it; entreated me to find out a suitable air for it, and reprobated the idea of giving it a tune so totally devoid of interest or grandeur as "Hey, tuttie taitie." Assuredly, your partiality for this tune must arise from the ideas associated in your mind by the tradition concerning it; for I never heard any person, and I have conversed again and again with the greatest enthusiasts for Scottish airs—I say, I never heard any one speak of it as worthy of notice.

I have been running over the whole hundred airs of which I lately sent you the list; and I think "Lewie Gordon" is the most happily adapted to your ode; at least, with a very slight variation of the fourth line, which I shall presently submit to you. There is in "Lewie Gordon" more of the grand than the plaintive, particularly when it is sung with a degree of spirit, which your words would oblige the singer to give it. I would have no scruple about substituting your ode in room of the song, "Lewie Gordon," which has neither the interest, the grandeur, nor the poetry, that characterize your verses. Now, the variation I have to suggest upon the last line of each verse (the only line too short for the air) is as follows:—

Verse 1. Or to [*glorious*] victory.
2. Chains [*chains*] and slavery.
3. Let him [*let him*] turn and flee.
4. Let him [*bravely*] follow me.
5. But they shall [*they shall*] be free.
6. Let us [*let us*] do or die!

If you connect each line with its own verse, I do not think you will find that either the sentiment or the expression loses any of its energy.

The only line which I dislike in the whole of the song is "Welcome to your gory bed!" Would not another word be preferable to "welcome?" In your next, I will expect to be

informed whether you agree to what I have proposed. The little alterations I submit with great deference.

The beauty of the verses you have made for "Oran Gaoil" will insure celebrity to the air. G. T.

(28) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*September*, 1793.]

I AM happy, my dear Sir, that my ode pleases you so much. Your idea "honor's bed" is, though a beautiful, a hackney'd idea; so, if you please, we will let the line stand as it is.* I have altered the song as follows:—

BANNOCKBURN: A SONG.

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY.

Tune—"Lewie Gordon."

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has often led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power—
Edward! Chains and Slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Traitor! Coward! turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's King and Law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or Free-man fa',
Soger! Hero! on wi' me!

* Chambers has noted his surprise that Burns here answers an objection of Thomson's that has not yet appeared in the correspondence, and suggests that there has been some misprinting or transplanting of Thomson's remarks. He adds that "many such liberties appear to have been taken by the original editor of this correspondence." Thomson must have written a letter between those numbered 13 and 14 which has been withheld, or No. 13 must have contained more than he has thought proper to publish.

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be—shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Forward! let us Do, or Die!!!

N.B.—I have borrowed the last stanza from the common stall edition of Wallace:—

"A false usurper sinks in every foe,
And liberty returns with every blow,"

a couplet worthy of Homer. Yesterday you had enough of my correspondence. The post goes, and my head aches miserably. One comfort! I suffer so much just now in this world for last night's debauch, that I shall escape scot-free for it in the world to come. Amen! R. B.

([14]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 12*th Sept.* 1793.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear Sir, for your observations on the list of my songs. I am happy to find your ideas so much in unison with my own, respecting the generality of the airs, as well as the verses. About some of them we differ, but there is no disputing about hobbyhorses. I shall not fail to profit by the remarks you make, and to reconsider the whole with attention.

"Dainty Davie" must be sung two stanzas together, and then the chorus; 'tis the proper way. I agree with you, that there may be something of pathos, or tenderness at least, in the air of "Fee him, Father," when performed with feeling; but a tender cast may be given almost to any lively air, if you sing it very slowly, expressively, and with serious words. I am, however, clearly and invariably for retaining the cheerful tunes joined to their own humorous verses, wherever the verses

are passable. But the sweet song for "Fee him, Father," which you began about the back of midnight, I will publish as an additional one. Mr. James Balfour, the king of good fellows, and the best singer of the lively Scottish ballads that ever existed, has charmed thousands of companies with "Fee him, Father," and with "Todlin Hame" also, to the old words, which never should be disunited from either of these airs. Some bacchanals I would wish to discard. "Fy, let us a' to the Bridal," for instance, is so coarse and vulgar, that I think it fit only to be sung in a company of drunken colliers;* and "Saw ye my Father" appears to me both indelicate and silly.

One word with regard to your heroic ode. I think, with great deference to the poet, that a prudent general would avoid saying anything to his soldiers which might tend to make death more frightful than it is. "Gory" presents a disagreeable image to the mind; and to tell them "Welcome to your gory bed," seems rather a discouraging address, notwithstanding the alternative which follows. I have shewn the song to three friends of excellent taste, and each of them objected to this line, which emboldens me to use the freedom of bringing it again under your notice. I would suggest:—

Now prepare for honor's bed,
Or for glorious victory!

G. T.

(29) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1793.

"WHO shall decide when Doctors disagree?" My ode pleases me so much, that I cannot alter it. Your proposed alterations would, in my opinion, make it tame. I am exceedingly obliged to you for putting me on reconstructing it, as I think I have much improved it. Instead of "Soger! hero!" I will have it to be:—

Caledonian! on wi' me!

I have scrutinised it over and over; and to the world,

* This expression of opinion, in the face of Burns's admiration of the song at page 219, *supra*, is scarcely polite. See the bard's rebuke, pages 235, 236, *infra*.

some way or other, it shall go as it is.* At the same time, it will not in the least hurt me, tho' you leave the song out altogether, and adhere to your first idea of adopting Logan's verses.

I have finished my song to "The Grey Cock," and in English, as you will see. Your objection of a syllable too much for the expression of the air is just; but allow me to say that the mere dividing of a dotted crotchet into a crotchet and quaver, is not a great matter; however, in that I have no pretensions to cope in judgment with you. Of the poetry I speak with confidence; but the music is a business where I hint my ideas with the utmost diffidence.

The old verses have merit, though unequal, and are popular. My advice is to set the air to the old words, and let mine follow as English verses. Here they are :—

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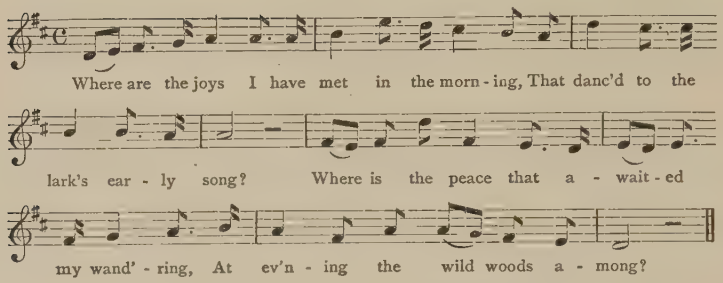
* Dr. Currie has remarked in reference to Thomson's objections to the line, "Welcome to your gory bed," that the "Leader who, in preparing for an engagement, attempts to withdraw his imagination from images of death will probably have but an imperfect success, and is not fitted to stand in the ranks of battle, where the liberties of a kingdom are at issue. Of such men, the conquerors of Bannockburn were not composed. Mr. Thomson's observation, therefore, seems not sufficiently considered."

Thomson published the ode in his second volume, which appeared in July, 1799. It is there set to the air "Lewie Gordon." The public, however, on being made acquainted—through Dr. Currie's edition—with Burns's partiality for the air "Hey, tuttie taitie," and how he had been prevailed on, against his better instincts, to alter and injure his verses, to suit Mr. Thomson's whim for the tune "Lewie Gordon," loudly demanded the restoration of the ode to its original form, and its own thrilling melody. Accordingly, when the third volume of Thomson's collection appeared in 1802, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled" was produced in its primal beauty, set to the air for which it had been composed.

Thomson prefaced it with the following note :—"The Poet originally intended this noble strain for the air 'Hey, tuttie taitie;' but, on a suggestion from the Editor of this work, who then thought 'Lewie Gordon' a fitter tune for the words, they were united together, and published in the preceding volume. The Editor, however, having since examined the air 'Hey, tuttie taitie' with more particular attention, frankly owns that he has changed his opinion, and now thinks it much better adapted for giving energy to the poetry than the air of *Lewie Gordon*. It is worthy of remark, that it appears to be the oldest Scottish air, concerning which anything like evidence is to be found."

FAIR JENNY.

Slow. Tune—"Saw ye my Father?"


Where are the joys I have met in the morn - ing, That danc'd to the
lark's ear - ly song? Where is the peace that a - wait - ed
my wand' - ring, At ev'n - ing the wild woods a - mong?

(*See* page 189, Vol. IV.)

Adieu! my dear Sir, the post goes, so I shall defer some other remarks until more leisure. R. B.

(30) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

September, 1793.

I HAVE been turning over some volumes of English songs, to find verses whose measures would suit the airs for which you have allotted me to find English songs. The following I picked up in an old collection, which will suit very well for "Nancy's to the greenwood gane." You must not, my dear Sir, expect all your English songs to have superlative merit, 'tis enough if they are passable:

> "The other night, with all her charms,
> My ardent passion crowning,
> My Celia sank within my arms,
> An equal transport owning," &c.

[This is rather a witty song, and will be found in Tom D'Urfey's collection. George Thomson seems to have regarded it as one of Burns's own compositions; for he has written on the margin, "Unpublishable surely! G. T."]

As for the air—"Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad," there is a fine English song for it in Ramsay's

Tea-table Miscellany, beginning, "Ah, Chloe! thou treasure, thou joy of my breast." For "John Anderson, my jo," you have, also in Ramsay's *Miscellany*, an excellent song, beginning—

"What means this niceness now of late?"

In the same *Miscellany* is not a bad song by Crawford to "Peggy, I must love thee," beginning—

"Beneath a beech's grateful shade."

As for English verses to "Geordie's Byre," take the following, altered a trifle from Ramsay,

"O Mary, thy graces and glances,
Thy smiles so enchantingly gay,
And converse bewitchingly charming,
Bright wit and good humor display," &c.

Since I am in the way of amending and abridging, let me recommend the following abridgement of a beautiful poem of Hamilton's, to suit "Tak your auld cloak about ye."

"Alas! the sunny hours are past,
The cheating scene, it will not last;
Let not the flatt'rer Hope persuade;
Ah, must I say, that it will fade!" &c.

For "Willie was a wanton wag," you have a song made on purpose, also by Hamilton, which you will find in Ramsay's *Miscellany*, beginning,

"Willy, ne'er enquire what end."

English verses for "The tither morn, as I forlorn," you have in my song,

"The last time I came o'er the moor,
And left Maria's dwelling."

For "Todlin Hame," take the following old English song, which I daresay is but little known:—

THE PRIMROSE.

Tune—"Todlin Hame."

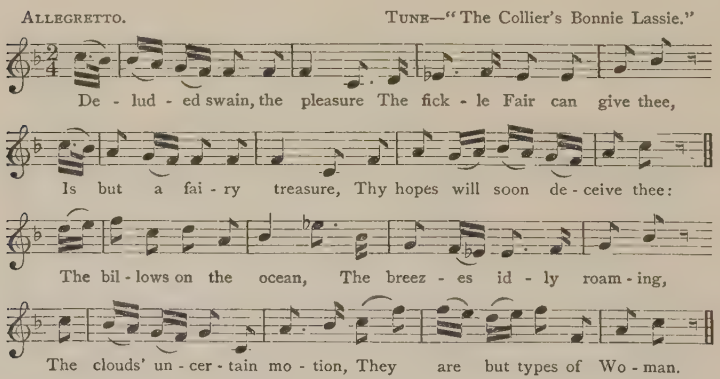
"Dost ask me, why I send thee here,
This firstling of the infant year—
This lovely native of the vale,
That hangs so pensive, and so pale?

"Look on its bending stalk, so weak
That, each way yielding, doth not break,
And see how aptly it reveals
The doubts and fears a lover feels.

"Look on its leaves of yellow hue
Bepearl'd thus with morning dew,
And these will whisper in thine ears
'The sweets of love are wash'd with tears.'"*

N.B.—I have altered it a little.

For "Muirland Willie" you have, in Ramsay's *Tea-table*, an excellent song, beginning, "Ah, why those tears in Nelly's eyes?" Then for "The Collier's Dochter," take the following old bacchanal:—


Allegretto.
Tune—"The Collier's Bonnie Lassie."
De - lud - ed swain, the pleasure The fick - le Fair can give thee,
Is but a fai - ry treasure, Thy hopes will soon de - ceive thee:
The bil - lows on the ocean, The breez - es id - ly roam - ing,
The clouds' un - cer - tain mo - tion, They are but types of Wo - man.

"Heav'ns! art thou not asham'd
To doat upon a feature?
If Man thou would'st be named,
Despise the silly creature;

* This pretty little piece has been so much altered from the original that, like the bacchanalian verses which follow, it may almost be reckoned as Burns's own.

Go, find an honest fellow;
Good claret set before thee;
Hold on till thou art mellow,
And then to bed in glory."

The faulty line in "Logan Water" I mend thus:—

"How can your flinty hearts enjoy
The widow's tears, the orphan's cry?"

The song otherwise will pass. As to "M'Gregor a Rora," you will see a song of mine to it, with a set of the air superior to yours, in the *Museum*, Vol. II., p. 181. The song begins "Raving winds around her blowing."

Your Irish airs are pretty, but they are rank Irish. If they were like the "Banks of Banna," for instance, though really Irish, yet in the Scotch taste, you might adopt them. Since you are so fond of Irish music, what say you to twenty-five of them, in an additional number? We could find this quantity of charming airs; I will take care that you shall not want songs; and I assure you that you would find it the most saleable of the whole. If you do not approve of "Roy's Wife" for the music's sake, we shall not insert it. "Deil tak the Wars" is a charming song; so is "Saw ye my Peggy?" "There's nae luck about the House" well deserves a place. I cannot say that "O'er the hills and far awa" strikes me as equal to your selection. "This is no my ain House" is a great favorite of mine; and if you will send me your set of it, I shall task my muse to her highest effort. What is your opinion of "I hae laid a herrin in saut?" I like it much. Your Jacobite airs are all pretty, and there are many others of the same kind pretty; but you have not room for them. You cannot, I think, insert "Fy, let us a' to the bridal," to any other words than its own.

What pleases me, as simple and *naive*, disgusts you

as ludicrous and low. For this reason, "Fy, gie me my coggie, Sirs;" "Fy, let us a' to the bridal," with several others of that cast, are to me highly pleasing; while, "Saw ye my Father, or saw ye my Mother?" delights me with its descriptive, simple pathos. Thus, my song, "Ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?" pleases myself so much, that I cannot try my hand at another song to the air; so I shall not attempt it. I know you will laugh at all this; but "ilka man wears his belt his ain gate."

Yours, R. BURNS.

([31]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*29th October*, 1793.]

YOUR last letter, my dear Thomson, was indeed laden with heavy news. Alas! poor Erskine!* The recollection that he was a coadjutor in your publication, has till now scared me from writing you, or turning my thoughts on composing for you.

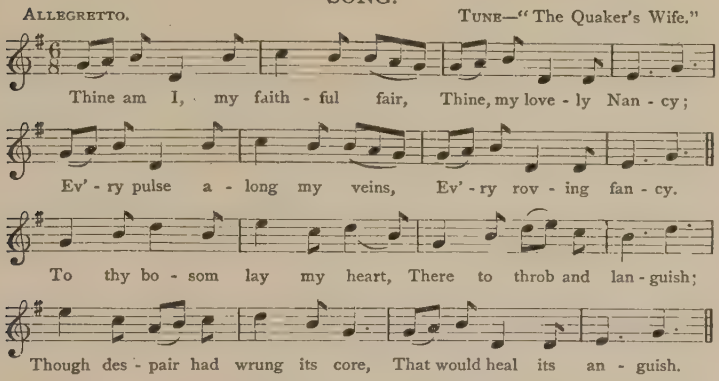
I am pleased that you are reconciled to "The Quaker's Wife," though, by the by, an old Highland gentleman, and a deep antiquarian, tells me that it is a Gaelic air, and known by the name of "Leiger 'm choss," which name you may, if you think fit, prefix as the name of the tune. It bears that name in the west country, where there is still half a stanza of the song preserved, which I take to have been the chorus. The Gaelic phrase they have corrupted into "Liggeram Coss:"—

* The tall, characteristic figure and contemplative countenance of this gentleman is familiar to students of "Kay's Edinburgh Characters," in which work a memoir of him is included. He resided with his sister, Lady Colville, at Drumsheugh, near the present Dean Bridge, from 1790 to 1793. Becoming involved in his circumstances, through gambling propensities, he drowned himself in the Forth, opposite Caroline Park, in September, 1793.

"Leiger 'm choss, my bonie wee lass,
Leiger 'm choss, my dearie;
A' the lee-lang winter night,
Leiger 'm choss, my dearie."

The following verses, I hope, will please you, as an English song to the air:—

SONG.


Allegretto.
Tune—"The Quaker's Wife."
Thine am I, my faith - ful fair, Thine, my love - ly Nan - cy;
Ev' - ry pulse a - long my veins, Ev' - ry rov - ing fan - cy.
To thy bo - som lay my heart, There to throb and lan - guish;
Though des - pair had wrung its core, That would heal its an - guish.

(*See* page 191, Vol. IV.)

Your objection to the English song I proposed for "John Anderson, my jo," is certainly just. The following is by an old acquaintance of mine, and I think has merit. You will see that each fifth line is made to suit the peculiar note you mention. The song was never in print, which, I think, is so much in your favor. The more original good poetry your Collection contains, it certainly has so much the more merit:—

SONG—By Gavin Turnbull.*

Tune—"John Anderson, my Jo."

"O condescend, dear charming maid,
My wretched state to view;

* Gavin Turnbull, poet and comedian, was born in Roxburghshire, and settled early in Kilmarnock, where he may have formed the acquaintance of Burns in 1786. A volume of his poems was printed at Glasgow in 1788. He was one of the players in Sutherland's company at Dumfries, which Burns warmly patronised even before he left Ellisland. Turnbull afterwards went to America, and the remainder of his history is a blank.

A tender swain to love betrayed,
And sad despair, by you:
While here, all *melancholy*,
My passion I deplore,
Yet, urged by some resistless fate,
I love thee more and more," &c.

The following address of Turnbull's to the Nightingale will suit as an English song to the air, "There was a Lass, and she was fair." By the by, Turnbull has a great many songs in MSS. which I can command, if you like his manner. Possibly, as he is an old friend of mine, I may be prejudiced in his favor; but I like some of his pieces very much:—

THE NIGHTINGALE—By G. Turnbull.

Tune—"Bonie Jean."

"Thou sweetest minstrel of the grove,
That ever tried the plaintive strain,
Awake thy tender tale of love
And soothe a poor forsaken swain;
Who, though the Muses deign to aid,
And teach him smoothly to complain;
Yet Delia, charming, cruel maid,
Is deaf to her forsaken swain," &c.

I shall just transcribe another of Turnbull's, which would go charmingly to "Lewie Gordon:"—

LAURA—By G. Turnbull.

Tune—"Lewie Gordon."

"Let me wander where I will—
Shady wood, or winding rill;
Where the sweetest May-born flowers
Paint the meadows, deck the bowers;
Where the linnets' early song
Echoes sweet the woods among;
Let me wander where I will,
Laura haunts my fancy still," &c.

The rest of your letter I shall answer at some other opportunity. Yours, R. B.

([15]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *7th November*, 1793.

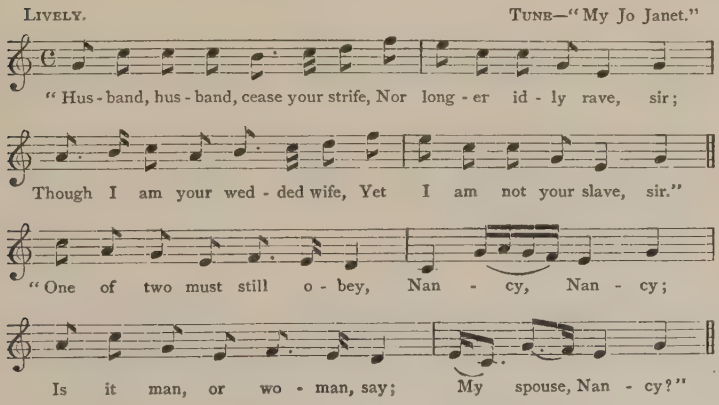
MY GOOD SIR,—After so long a silence, it gave me peculiar pleasure to recognise your well-known hand, for I had begun to be apprehensive that all was not well with you. I am happy to find, however, that your silence did not proceed from that cause, and that you have got among the ballads once more.

I have to thank you for your English song to "Leiger 'm choss," which I think extremely good, although the coloring is warm. Your friend Mr. Turnbull's songs have doubtless considerable merit; and as you have the command of his manuscripts, I hope you may find out some that will answer as English songs to the airs yet unprovided. G. T.

([32]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

December, 1793.

TELL me, my dear Sir, if you like the following verses to "My Jo Janet?"


LIVELY.
TUNE—"My Jo Janet."
"Hus - band, hus - band, cease your strife, Nor long - er id - ly rave, sir;
Though I am your wed - ded wife, Yet I am not your slave, sir."
"One of two must still o - bey, Nan - cy, Nan - cy;
Is it man, or wo - man, say; My spouse, Nan - cy?"

(*See* page 193, Vol. IV.)

Yours, R. B.

([16]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 17*th April*, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—Owing to the distress of our friend [Cunningham] for the loss of his child, at the time of his receiving your admirable but melancholy letter,* I had not an opportunity, till lately, of perusing it. How sorry I am to find Burns saying, "Canst thou minister to a mind diseased?" while he is delighting others from one end of the island to the other. Like the hypochondriac who went to consult a physician upon his case—"Go," says the doctor, "and see the famous Carlini, who keeps all Paris in good humor." "Alas! Sir," replied the patient, "I am that unhappy Carlini!"

Your plan for our meeting together pleases me greatly,† and I trust that, by some means or other, it will soon take place; but your bacchanalian challenge almost frightens me, for I am a miserably weak drinker!

Allan is much gratified by your good opinion of his talents. He has just begun a sketch from your "Cotter's Saturday Night," and, if it pleases himself in the design, he will probably etch or engrave it. In subjects of the pastoral and humorous kind he is, perhaps, unrivalled by any artist living. He fails a little in giving beauty and grace to his females, and his coloring is sombre, otherwise his paintings and drawings would be in greater request.

I like the music of the "Sutor's Dochter," and will consider whether it shall be added to the last volume. Your verses to it are pretty;‡ but your humorous English song to suit "Jo Janet" is inimitable. What think you of the air "Within a mile of Edinburgh?" It has always struck me as a modern English imitation; but it is said to be Oswald's, and is so much liked, that I believe I must include it.§ The verses are little better than namby-pamby. Do you consider it worth a stanza or two? G. T.

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* See page 392, Vol. IV.

† See page 400, Vol. IV.

‡ See page 398, Vol. IV.

§ There was an old strain to the words "Within a mile of Edinburgh town," but the popular air here referred to is a composition of Hook, father of Mr. Theodore Hook.

([33]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

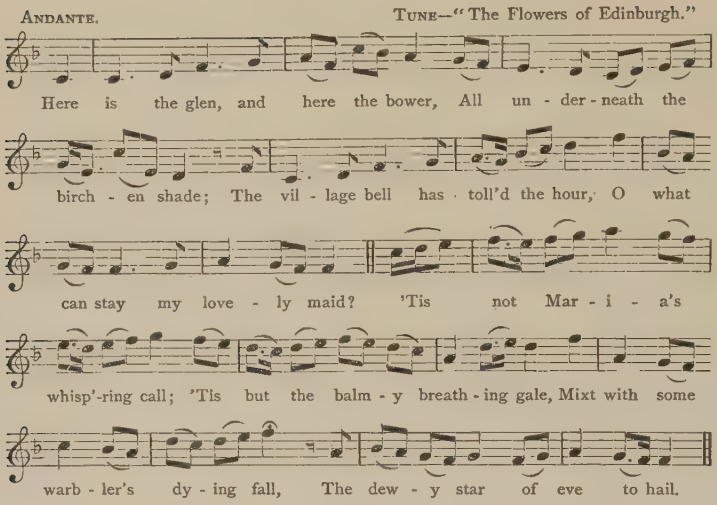
June, 1794.

My Dear Sir,—I return you the plates, with which I am highly pleased, your criticism on the grouping of the young lad being introduced to the mother only excepted. There I entirely agree with you. I would humbly propose that instead of the younker knitting, the artist would (in preference to your "trump"), put a stock and horn among his hands, as if he were screwing and adjusting it. I would have returned them sooner, but I waited the opinion of a friend of mine, who is positively the ablest judge on the subject I have ever met with, and though an unknown, is yet a superior artist with the burin, and he is quite charmed with Allan's manner. I got him a peep of the gentle shepherd; and he pronounces Allan a most original artist of great excellence.

For my part, I look on Mr. Allan's choosing my favorite poem for his subject, to be one of the highest compliments I have ever received.

I am quite vexed at Pleyel's being cooped up in France, as it will put an entire stop to our work. Now, and for six or seven months, I shall be quite in song, as you shall see by and by. I know you value a composition, because it is made by one of the great ones, as little as I do. However, I got an air, pretty enough, composed by Lady Elizabeth Heron, of Heron, which she calls "The Banks of Cree." Cree is a beautiful romantic stream, and as her Ladyship is a particular friend of mine, I have written the following song to it:—

SONG.


ANDANTE.
TUNE—"The Flowers of Edinburgh."
Here is the glen, and here the bower, All un - der - neath the
birch - en shade; The vil - lage bell has toll'd the hour, O what
can stay my love - ly maid? 'Tis not Mar - i - a's
whisp'-ring call; 'Tis but the balm - y breath - ing gale, Mixt with some
warb - ler's dy - ing fall, The dew - y star of eve to hail.

(*See* page 202, Vol. IV.)

The air, I fear, is not worth your while; else I would send it you. I am hurried; so farewell until next post. My "seal" is all well, except that my holly must be a *bush*, not a *tree*, as in the present shield. I also enclose it, and will send the pebble by the first opportunity.*

Yours, R. B.

(34) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*July*, 1794.]

Is there no news yet, my dear Sir, of Pleyel? Or is your work to be at a dead stop, until these glorious Crusaders, the Allies, set our modern Orpheus at liberty from the savage thraldom of Democrat dis-

* This refers to the commission contained in the poet's letter to Alexander Cunningham, of 3d March, 1794, to have his shield, with crest and motto, designed and cut on a seal. Cunningham had forwarded (through Thomson) a sketch of the design, and Burns here rectifies it.

cords? Alas the day! and woe is me! That auspicious period, pregnant with the happiness of Millions* —that golden age, spotless with Monarchical innocence and Despotic purity—that Millennium, of which the earliest dawn will enlighten even Republican turbulence, and show the swinish multitude that they are but beasts, and, like beasts, must be led by the nose, and goaded in the backside—those days of sweet chords and concords seem by no means near.

Oh, that mine eyes were fountains of waters, for thy rueful sake, poor Prussia! that as thy ire has deluged the plains of Flanders, so might my grief inundate the regions of Gallovidia. Ye children of success, ye sons of prosperity, ye who never shed the tear of sorrow, or felt a wish unsatisfied, spare your reproaches on the left-handed shifts and shuffling of unhappy Brandenburg! Once was his rectitude straight as the shafts of the Archers of Edina, and stubborn as the granite of Gallovidian hills—the Batavian witnessed his bowels of compassion, and Sarmatia rejoiced in his truth. But alas! The needy man who has known better times can only console himself with a song, thus :—

> When princes and prelates, and hot-headed zealots
> A' Europe had set in a low, a low, &c.
>
> (*See* page 136, Vol. IV.)

So much for nonsense! I have sent you by my much-valued friend, Mr. Syme, of this place, the pebble for my seal. You will please remember that my holly is a bush, not a tree.

I have three or four songs on the way for you; but I have not yet put the last hand to them. Pray are you going to insert "Bannockburn," or "Wilt thou be my dearie," in your Collection? If you are not, let me know, as in that case I will give them to

* Here a large *hiatus* occurs in former editions. Dr. Currie has a foot-note thus :—"A part of this letter has been omitted for obvious political reasons."

Johnson's *Museum*. I told you that our friend Clarke is quite an enthusiast in the idea that the air "Nancy's to the greenwood gane," is capable of sentiment and pathos in a high degree. In this, if I remember right, you did not agree with him. I intend setting my verses which I wrote and sent you for "The last time I came o'er the moor," to this air. I have made an alteration in the beginning of the song, which you will find on the new page.

SONG.

Tune—"Nancy's to the greenwood gane."

"Farewell, thou stream that winding flows
Around Eliza's dwelling!
O mem'ry! spare the cruel throes
Within my bosom swelling," etc.

(*See* page 44, Vol. VI.)

I have presented a copy of your songs to the daughter of a much-valued and much-honored friend of mine, Mr. Graham of Fintry. I wrote on the blank side of the title-page, the following address to the young lady :—

"Here, where the Scottish Muse immortal lives
In sacred strains and tuneful numbers joined,
Accept the gift; though humble he that gives,
Rich is the tribute of the grateful mind," etc.

(*See* page 19, Vol. VI.)

I have also promised the young lady a copy of your Sonatas: will you have the goodness to send a copy directed to Miss Graham of Fintry?

Another friend of mine goes to town in a week or so, when you shall again have another packet of nonsense from—Yours, R. B.

([17]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 10*th August*, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—I owe you an apology for having so long delayed to acknowledge the favor of your last. I fear it will be as you say—I shall have no more songs from Pleyel till France and we are friends; but, nevertheless, I am desirous to be prepared with the poetry; and as the season approaches in which your Muse of Coila visits you, I trust, I shall, as formerly, be frequently gratified with the result of your amorous and tender interviews. G. T.

([35]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

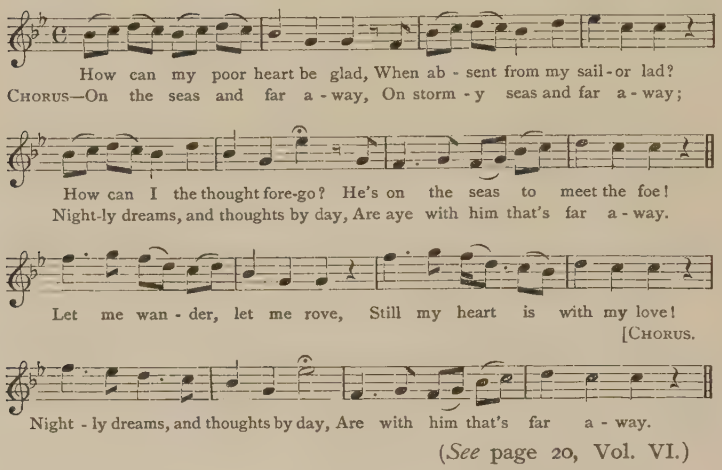
[30*th August*, 1794.]

THE last evening I was straying out and thinking of "O'er the Hills and far away," I spun the following stanzas for it; but whether my spinning will deserve to be laid up in store, like the precious thread of the silkworm, or brushed to the devil, like the vile manufacture of the spider, I leave, my dear Sir, to your usual candid criticism. I was pleased with several lines in it at first, but I own that now it appears rather a flimsy business.

This is just a hasty sketch, until I see whether it be worth a critique. We have many sailor-songs, but, as far as I at present recollect, they are mostly effusions of the jovial sailor, not the wailings of his lovelorn mistress. I must here make one sweet exception —"Sweet Annie frae the sea-beach came." Now for the song:—

ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

ALLEGRETTO. TUNE—"O'er the Hills and Far Awa'."


How can my poor heart be glad, When ab - sent from my sail - or lad?
CHORUS—On the seas and far a - way, On storm - y seas and far a - way;
How can I the thought fore-go? He's on the seas to meet the foe!
Night-ly dreams, and thoughts by day, Are aye with him that's far a - way.
Let me wan - der, let me rove, Still my heart is with my love!
[CHORUS.
Night - ly dreams, and thoughts by day, Are with him that's far a - way.

(*See* page 20, Vol. VI.)

I give you leave to abuse this song, but do it in the spirit of Christian meekness.

Yours ever, R. B.

([18]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 16 *Sept.* 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—You have anticipated my opinion of "On the seas and far away." I do not think it one of your very happiest productions, though it certainly contains stanzas that are worthy of all acceptation.

The second is the least to my liking, particularly "Bullets, spare my only joy!" Confound the bullets! It might perhaps be objected to the third verse, "At the starless midnight hour," that it has too much grandeur of imagery, and that greater simplicity of thought would have better suited the character of a sailor's sweetheart. The tune, it must be remembered, is of the brisk, cheerful kind. Upon the whole, therefore, in my humble opinion, the song would be better adapted to the tune, if it consisted only of the first and last verses, with the choruses. G. T.

(36) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

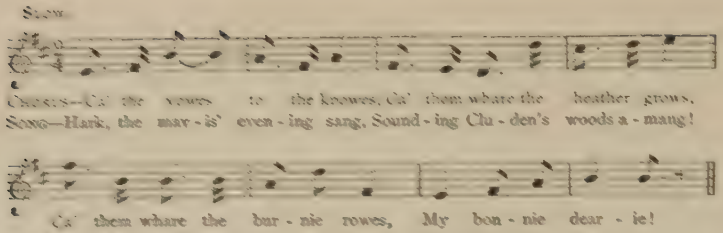
Sept. 1794.

LITTLE do the Trustees for our Manufactures, when they frank my letters to you—little do they consider what kind of manufacture they are encouraging. The manufacture of Nonsense was certainly not in idea when the Act of Parliament was framed, and yet, under my hands and your *cover*, it thrives amazingly. Well, there are more pernicious manufactures, that is certain!

I shall withdraw my "O'er the seas and far away" altogether; it is unequal, and unworthy of the work. Making a poem is like begetting a son: you cannot know whether you have a wise man or a fool, until you produce him to the world and try him.

For that reason I send you the offspring of my brain, abortions and all; and as such, pray look over them, and forgive them and burn them. I am flattered at your adopting "Ca' the Yowes to the Knowes," as it was owing to me that ever it saw the light. About seven years ago, I was well acquainted with a worthy little fellow of a clergyman, a Mr. Clunie, who sang it charmingly; and, at my request, Mr. Clarke took it down from his singing. When I gave it to Johnson, I added some stanzas to the song, and mended others, but still it will not do for *you.** In a solitary stroll which I took to-day, I tried my hand on a few pastoral lines, following up the idea of the chorus, which I would preserve. Here it is, with all its crudities and imperfections on its head.

* The song referred to is given at page 101, Vol. III.


Slow
Chorus—Ca' the yowes to the knowes, Ca' them whare the heather grows,
Song—Hark, the mav - is' even - ing sang, Sound - ing Clu - den's woods a - mang!
Ca' them whare the bur - nie rowes, My bon - nie dear - ie!
Then a round - ing let us gang, My bon - nie dear - ie.

(*See* page 20, Vol. VI.)

I will give you my opinion of your other newly adopted songs, my first scribbling fit.

Adieu! R. B.

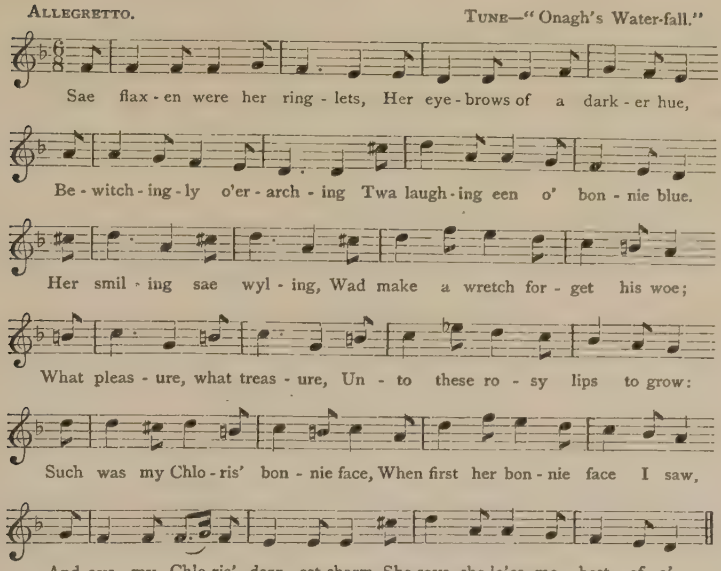
(*) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*Sept.* 1794.]

Do you know, my dear Sir, a blackguard Irish song called "Oonagh's Waterfall," or "The lock that scattered Oonagh's p—ss?" Our friend Cunningham sings it delightfully. The air is charming, and I have often regretted the want of decent verses to it. It is too much, at least for *my* humble rustic Muse, to expect that every effort of hers must have merit; still, I think that it is better to have mediocre verses to a favorite air, than none at all. On this principle I have all along proceeded in the *Scots Musical Museum;* and as that publication is at its last volume, I intend the following song to the air I mentioned, for that work.

If it does not suit you as an Editor, you may be pleased to have verses to it, that you may sing it before ladies.

SHE SAYS SHE LO'ES ME BEST OF A'.


ALLEGRETTO.
TUNE—"Onagh's Water-fall."
Sae flax - en were her ring - lets, Her eye - brows of a dark - er hue,
Be - witch - ing - ly o'er - arch - ing Twa laugh - ing een o' bon - nie blue.
Her smil - ing sae wyl - ing, Wad make a wretch for - get his woe;
What pleas - ure, what treas - ure, Un - to these ro - sy lips to grow:
Such was my Chlo - ris' bon - nie face, When first her bon - nie face I saw,
And aye my Chlo-ris' dear - est charm, She says she lo'es me best of a'.

(*See* page 23, Vol. VI.)

Not to compare small things with great, my taste in music is like the mighty Frederic of Prussia's taste in painting: we are told that he frequently admired what the Connoisseurs decried, and, always without any hypocrisy, confest his admiration. I am sensible that my taste in music must be inelegant and vulgar, because people of undisputed and cultivated taste can find no merit in many of my favorite tunes. Still, because I am cheaply pleased, is that any reason why I should deny myself that pleasure? Many of our strathspeys, ancient and modern, give me most exquisite enjoyment, where you and other judges would probably be showing signs of disgust. For instance, I am just now making verses to "Rothiemurche's Rant," an air which puts me in raptures; and in fact, unless I be pleased with the tune, I never can make

verses to it. Here I have Clarke on my side, who is a judge that I will pit against any of you. "Rothiemurche," he says, "is an air both original and beautiful;" and, on his recommendation, I have taken the first part of the tune for a chorus, and the fourth or last part for the song. I am but two stanzas deep in the work, and possibly you may think, and justly, that the poetry is as little worth your attention as the music.

SONG.

Tune—"Rothiemurche's Rant."

Chorus—"Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks,
Wilt thou be my Dearie, O?

"Now nature cleeds the flowery lea,
And a' is young and sweet like thee;
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou'lt be my Dearie, O?"

(*See* page 39, Vol. VI.)

I have begun anew "Let me in this ae night."* Do you think that we ought to retain the old chorus? I think we must retain both the old chorus and the first stanza of the old song. I do not altogether like the third line of the first stanza, but cannot alter it to please myself. I am just three stanzas deep in it. How do you like this, and would you have the *denouement* to be successful or otherwise? Should she "let him in," or not?

SONG.

Tune—"Let me in this ae night."

"O lassie, art thou sleepin yet,
Or art thou wauken, I wad wit?
For love has bound me hand an' fit,
And I would fain be in, jo.

* The poet had unsuccessfully tried his hand on this subject in August 1793 (see page 201, *supra*). The present effort is not much better.

"*Chorus*—O let me in this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night;
O let me in this ae night,
I'll no come back again, jo.

"Tho' never durst my tongue reveal,
Lang, lang my heart to thee's been leal;
O lassie dear, ae last fareweel,
For pity's cause alane, jo.
O let me in, &c.

"O wyte na me until thou prove
The fatal force o' mighty love,
Then should on me thy fancy rove,
Count my care by thy ain, jo.
O let me in, &c.

"O pity's ay to woman dear—
She heav'd a sigh, she drapt a tear;
'Twas love for me that brought him here;
Sae how can I complain, jo?'

"*Chorus*—O come your ways this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night;
O come your ways this ae night,
But ye maunna do't again, jo!"

Did you not once propose "The sow's tail to Geordie" as an air for your work? I am quite delighted with it; but I acknowledge that is no mark of its *real* excellence. I once set about verses for it, which I meant to be in the alternate way of a lover and his mistress chanting together. I have not the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Thomson's Christian name; and yours, I am afraid, is rather burlesque for sentiment, else I had meant to have made you the hero and heroine of the little piece.

I had just written four stanzas at random, which I intend to have woven somewhere into, probably at the conclusion of, the song.

HE.

"The bee that thro' the sunny hour
Sips nectar in the breathing flower,
Compar'd wi' my delight is poor,
Upon the lips o' Jeanie."

SHE.

"The woodbine in the dewy weet,
When e'enin shades in silence meet,
Is nocht sae fragrant and sae sweet
As is a kiss o' Geordie."

HE.

"Let Fortune's wheel at random rin,
And Fools may tyne and Knaves may win;
My thoughts are a' bound up in ane,
And that's my ain dear Jeanie."

SHE.

"What's a' the joys that gowd can gie?
I dinna care a single flie;
The lad I love's the lad for me,
And that's my ain dear Geordie."

(*See* page 65, Vol. VI.)

So much for an idle farago of a gossiping letter. You once asked my air for "Brunswick's great Prince;" it is "Campbells are Comin'."

Do you know a droll Scots song more famous for its humor than delicacy, called "The Grey Goose and the Gled?" Mr. Clarke took down the notes (such as they are) at my request, which I shall give, with some decenter verses, to Johnson. Mr. Clarke says that the tune is positively an old chant of the ROMISH CHURCH, which corroborates the old tradition that at the Reformation, the Reformers burlesqued much of the old Church music with setting them to bawdy verses.

As a further proof, the common name for this song is "Cumnock Psalms." As there can be no harm in

transcribing a stanza of a Psalm, I shall give you two or three; possibly the song is new to you :—

CUMNOCK PSALMS.

"As I looked o'er yon Castle wa'
I spied a grey goose and a gled," &c.

So much for the Psalmody of Cumnock!* How do you like the following epigram which I wrote the other day on a lovely young girl's recovery from a fever? Dr. Maxwell—the identical Maxwell whom Burke mentioned in the House of Commons—was the physician who seemingly saved her from the grave; and to him I address the following:

TO DR. MAXWELL,

ON MISS JESSIE STAIG'S RECOVERY.

Maxwell, if merit here you crave,
That merit I deny;
You save fair Jessie from the grave!
An angel could not die.

God grant you patience with this stupid epistle!—Amen! R. B.

(19) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

[*Oct.* 1794.]

I PERCEIVE the sprightly Muse is now attendant upon her favorite poet whose "woodnotes wild" are becoming as enchanting as ever. "She says she loes me best of a'" is one of the pleasantest table songs I have ever seen, and henceforth shall be mine when the song is going round. I'll give Cunningham a copy; he can more powerfully proclaim its merit. I am far from undervaluing your taste for the Strathspey music; on the contrary, I think it highly animating and

* This is one of the grossest of the songs contained in the collection called "The Merry Muses of Caledonia." The frigid fiddler's hair would stand on end in perusing it! The tune is in the *Museum*, No. 405. See page 3, Vol. VI.

agreeable, and that some of the Strathspeys, when graced with such verses as yours, will make very pleasing songs, in the way that rough Christians are tempered and softened by lovely woman; without whom, you know, they had been brutes.

I am clear for having "The Sow's Tail," particularly as your proposed verses to it are so extremely promising. "Geordie," as you observe, is a name only fit for burlesque composition. Mrs. Thomson's name (Katherine) is not at all poetical. Retain *Jeanie* therefore, and make the other Jamie, or any other that sounds agreeably.

Your "Ca' the ewes," is a precious little morceau. Indeed I am perfectly astonished and charmed with the endless variety of your fancy. Here let me ask you whether you never seriously turned your thoughts to dramatic writing? That is a field worthy of your genius, in which it might shine forth in all its splendor. One or two successful pieces upon the London stage would make your fortune. The rage at present is for musical dramas; few or none of those which have appeared since "The Duenna" possesses much poetical merit: there is little in the conduct of the fable or in the dialogue to interest the audience. They are chiefly vehicles for music and pageantry. I think you might produce a comic opera in three acts, which would live by the poetry, at the same time that it would be proper to take every assistance from her tuneful sister. Part of the songs of course would be to our favorite Scottish airs; the rest might be left to the London composer —*Storace*, for Drury Lane, or *Shield*, for Covent Garden: both of them very able and popular musicians. I believe that interest and manœuvring are often necessary to have a drama brought on; so it may be with the namby-pamby tribe of flowery scribblers; but were you to address Mr. Sheridan himself by letter, and send him a dramatic piece, I am persuaded he would, for the honor of genius, give it a fair and candid trial. Excuse me for obtruding these hints upon your consideration.

G. T.

([20]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 14*th Oct.* 1794.

THE last eight days have been devoted to the re-examination of the Scottish collections. I have read, and sung, and fiddled, and considered, till I am half blind, and wholly stupid. The few airs I have added are enclosed.

Peter Pindar has at length sent me all the songs I expected from him, which are in general elegant and beautiful. Have you heard of a London collection of Scottish airs and songs, just published by Mr. Ritson, an Englishman? I shall send you a copy. His introductory essay on the subject is curious, and evinces great reading and research, but does not decide the question as to the origin of our melodies; though he shows clearly that Mr. Tytler, in his ingenious dissertation, has adduced no sort of proof of the hypothesis he wished to establish; and that his classification of the airs, according to the æras when they were composed, is mere fancy and conjecture. On John Pinkerton, Esq., he has no mercy; but consigns him to damnation! He snarls at my publication on the score of Pindar being engaged to write songs for it; uncandidly and unjustly leaving it to be inferred, that the songs of Scottish writers had been sent a packing to make room for Peter's! Of you he speaks with some respect, and gives you a passing hit or two, for daring to dress up a little some foolish songs for the *Museum*. His sets of the Scottish airs are taken, he says, from the oldest collections and best authorities; many of them, however, have a strange aspect, and are so unlike the sets which are sung by every person of taste, old or young, in town or country, that we can scarcely recognise the features of our favorites. By going to the oldest collections of our music, it does not follow that we find the melodies in their original state. These melodies had been preserved, we know not how long, by oral communication, before being collected and printed; and as different persons sing the same air very differently, according to their accurate or confused recollection of it, so, even supposing the first collectors to have possessed the industry, the taste, and discernment to choose the best they could hear (which is far from certain), still it must evidently be a chance, whether the collections exhibit any of the melodies in the state they were first composed. In selecting the melodies for my own collection, I have been as much guided by the living as by the dead. Where these differed, I preferred the sets that appeared to me the most simple and beautiful, and the most generally approved; and without meaning any compliment to my own capability of choosing, or speaking of the pains I have taken, I flatter myself that my sets will be found equally freed from vulgar errors on the one hand, and affected graces on the other. G. T.

([38]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

My Dear Friend,—By this morning's post I have your list, and, in general, I highly approve of it. I shall, at more leisure, give you a critique on the whole. In the meantime, let me offer at a new improvement, or rather a restoring of old simplicity, in one of your newly adopted songs :—

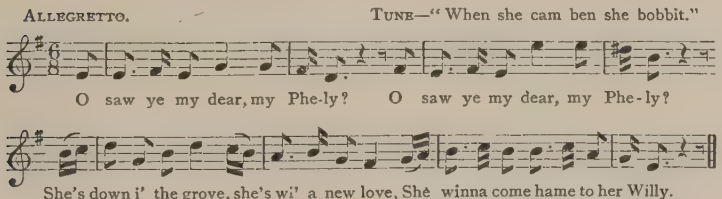
> "When she cam ben she bobbit (a crotchet stop)
> When she cam ben, she bobbit; (do.)
> And when she cam ben, she kiss'd Cockpen,
> And syne denied that she did it" (a crotchet stop).

This is the old rhythm, and by far the most original and beautiful. Let the harmony of the bass at the stops be full, and thin and dropping through the rest of the air, and you will give the tune a noble and striking effect. Perhaps I am betraying my ignorance; but Mr. Clarke is decidedly of my opinion. He goes to your town by to-day's Fly, and I wish you would call on him, and take his opinion in general; you know his taste is a standard. He will return here in a week or two, so please do not miss asking for him. One thing I hope he will do, which would give me high satisfaction—persuade you to adopt my favorite, "Craigieburn Wood," in your selection; it is as great a favorite of his as of mine. The lady on whom it was made is one of the finest women in Scotland; and, in fact (*entre nous*), is, in a manner, to me, what Sterne's Eliza was to him—a Mistress, or Friend, or what you will, in the guileless simplicity of Platonic love. (Now, don't put any of your squinting constructions on this, or have any clishmaclavers about it among our acquaintances.) I assure you that to my lovely Friend you are indebted for many of your best songs of mine. Do you think that the sober gin-

horse routine of existence could inspire a man with life, and love, and joy—could fire him with enthusiasm, or melt him with pathos equal to the genius of your Book? No, no! Whenever I want to be more than ordinary in song—to be in some degree equal to your diviner airs—do you imagine I fast and pray for the celestial emanation? *Tout au contraire!* I have a glorious recipe; the very one that for his own use was invented by the Divinity of Healing and Poesy, when erst he piped to the flocks of Admetus. I put myself in the regimen of admiring a fine woman; and in proportion to the adorability of her charms, in proportion you are delighted with my verses. The lightning of her eye is the godhead of Parnassus, and the witchery of her smile the divinity of Helicon!

To descend to the business with which I began: if you like my idea of "When she cam ben she bobbit," the following stanzas of mine, altered a little from what they were formerly when set to another air [Eppie Macnab, p. 58, Vol. IV.], may perhaps do instead of worse stanzas:—

SONG. (QUASI DICAT, PHILLIS.)


ALLEGRETTO.
TUNE—"When she cam ben she bobbit."
O saw ye my dear, my Phe-ly? O saw ye my dear, my Phe-ly?
She's down i' the grove, she's wi' a new love, She winna come hame to her Willy.

What says she, my dear, my Phely?
What says she, my dear, my Phely?
She lets thee to wit she has thee forgot,
And for ever disowns thee, her Willy.

O had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
O had I ne'er seen thee, my Phely!
As light as the air, as fause as thou'se fair,
Thou's broken the heart o' thy Willy.

Now for a few miscellaneous remarks. "The Posie" is my composition; the air was taken down from Mrs. Burns's voice. It is well known in the west country, but the old words are trash. By the by, take a look at the tune again, and tell me if you do not think it is the original from which "Roslin Castle" is composed. The second part, in particular, for the first two or three bars, is exactly the old air. "Strathallan's Lament" is mine; the music is by our right trusty and deservedly well-beloved Allan Masterton. The "Young Hd. Rover" (Morag) is also mine, but is not worthy of the fine air. "Donocht-head" is not mine; I would give ten pounds it were. It appeared first in the *Edinburgh Herald*, and came to the editor of that paper with the Newcastle post-mark on it. "Whistle o'er the lave o't" is mine; the music said to be by a John Bruce, a celebrated violin-player in Dumfries, about the beginning of this century. This I know, Bruce, who was an honest man, though a red-wud Highlandman, constantly claimed it; and by the old musical people here is believed to be the author of it.

"O how can I be blythe and glad" is mine; but as it is already appropriated to an air by itself, both in the *Museum*, and from thence to Ritson (I have got that book), I think it would be as well to leave it out. However, do as you please.

"M'Pherson's Farewell" is mine, excepting the chorus, and one stanza.

"Andrew and his cutty gun." The song to which it is set in the *Museum* is mine, and was composed on Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, commonly and deservedly called "The Flower of Strathmore."

"The Quaker's Wife." Do not give the tune that name, but the old Highland one, "Leiger 'm chose." The only fragment remaining of the old words is the

chorus, still a favorite lullaby of my old mother, from whom I learned it—

"Leiger 'm chose, my bonie wee lass,
And Leiger 'm chose, my dearie;
A' the lee-lang winter night,
Leiger 'm chose, my dearie."

The current name for the reel to this day at country weddings is *Leggeram Cosh*, a Lowland corruption of the original Gaelic. I have altered the first stanza, which I would have to stand thus—

"Thine am I, my faithful Fair,
Well thou may'st discover;*
Every pulse along my veins
Tells the ardent lover."

"Saw ye my father?" I am decidedly of opinion that you should set the tune to the old song, and let mine follow for English verses; but as you please.

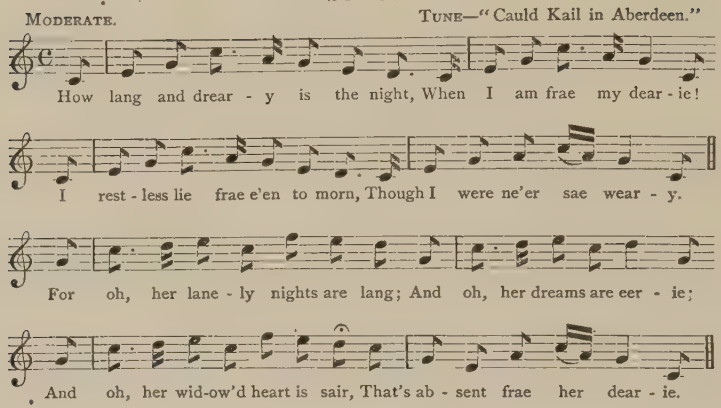
"In simmer when the hay was mawn," and "O for ane-and-twenty, Tam," are both mine. The set of the last in the *Museum* does not please me; but if you will get any of our ancienter Scots fiddlers to play you, in strathspey time, "The Moudiewart"—that is the name of the air—I think it will delight you.

"How long and dreary is the night!" I met with some such words in a collection of songs somewhere, which I altered and enlarged; and to please you, and to suit your favorite air of "Cauld Kail," I have taken a stride or two across my room, and have arranged it anew, as you will find on the other page.

---

* The alteration here made is no improvement; but the poet had now lost conceit of "Clarinda," the proper heroine of the song; and therefore he erases the once loved name of "Nancy," leaving the heroineship indefinite. By and by we shall see that the name "Chloris" is installed in its place.

SONG.


MODERATE.
TUNE—"Cauld Kail in Aberdeen."
How lang and drear - y is the night, When I am frae my dear - ie!
I rest - less lie frae e'en to morn, Though I were ne'er sae wear - y.
For oh, her lane - ly nights are lang; And oh, her dreams are eer - ie;
And oh, her wid-ow'd heart is sair, That's ab - sent frae her dear - ie.

(*See* page 31, Vol. VI.)

Tell me how you like this. I differ from your idea of the expression of the tune. There is, to me, a great deal of tenderness in it. You cannot, in my opinion, dispense with a bass to your addenda airs. A lady of my acquaintance, a noted performer, plays "Nae luck about the house," and sings it at the same time so charmingly, that I shall never bear to see any of my songs sent into the world as naked as Mr. What-d'ye-call-im * has done in his London collection.

These English songs gravel me to death. I have not that command of the language that I have of my native tongue. In fact, I think my ideas are more barren in English than in Scottish. I have been at "Duncan Gray," to dress it in English, but all I can do is deplorably stupid †—for instance,

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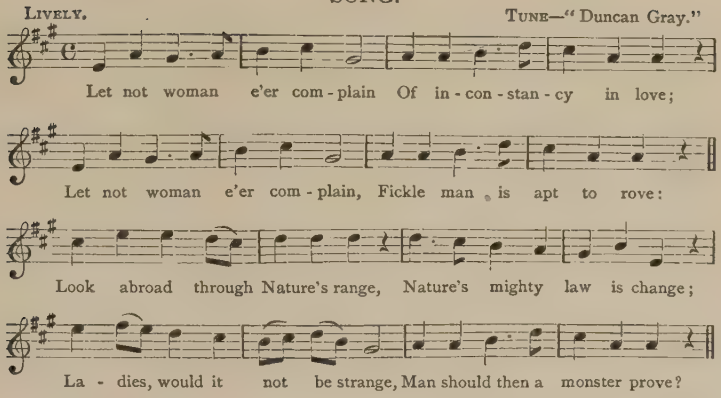
* Mr. Ritson, in his publication, "Scottish Songs."

† "I cannot agree with the Poet in thinking this a stupid song; and therefore I will publish it.—G. T."

SONG.


Lively.
Tune—"Duncan Gray."
Let not woman e'er com-plain Of in-con-stan-cy in love;
Let not woman e'er com-plain, Fickle man is apt to rove:
Look abroad through Nature's range, Nature's mighty law is change;
La-dies, would it not be strange, Man should then a monster prove?

(*See* page 32, Vol. VI.)

If you insert both Peter's song and mine, to the tune of "The Bonnie Brucket Lassie," it will cost you engraving the first verse of both songs, as the rhythm of the two is considerably different. As "Fair Eliza" is already published, I am totally indifferent whether you give it a place or not; but to my taste, the rhythm of my song to that air would have a much more original effect.

"Love never more shall give me pain," has long been appropriated to a popular air of the same title, for which reason, in my opinion, it would be improper to set it to "My Lodging is on the cold ground." There is a song in the *Museum* by a *ci-devant* goddess of mine,* which I think not unworthy of the air, and suits the rhythm equally with "Love never more," &c. It begins—

"Talk not of love, it gives me pain."

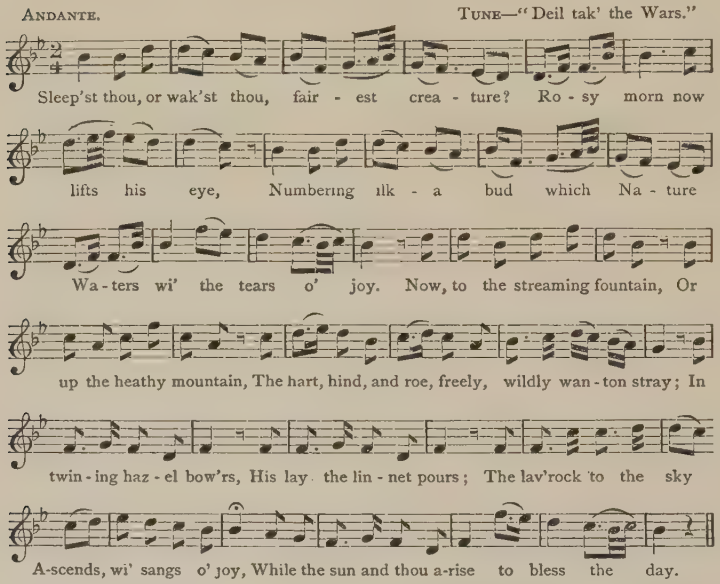
---

* Chambers here paused to remark thus:—"It was right, even in these poetico-Platonic affairs, to be off with the old love before he was on with the new. Yet it was only four months before—only in June, that she was 'my ever-dear Clarinda!' And a letter of mere *friendship* was then too cold to be attempted! (See page 140, *supra*.) O womankind, think of that when you are addressed otherwise than in the language of sober common sense!"

Since the above, I have been out in the country taking a dinner with a friend, where I met the lady whom I mentioned in the second page of this odds-and-ends of a letter. As usual, I got into song, and returning home I composed the following—

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTE TO HIS MISTRESS.

ANDANTE. TUNE—"Deil tak' the Wars."

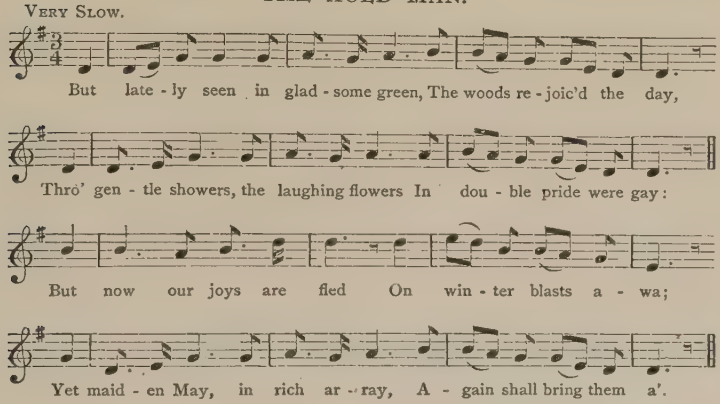

Sleep'st thou, or wak'st thou, fair - est crea - ture? Ro - sy morn now
lifts his eye, Numbering ilk - a bud which Na - ture
Wa - ters wi' the tears o' joy. Now, to the streaming fountain, Or
up the heathy mountain, The hart, hind, and roe, freely, wildly wan - ton stray; In
twin - ing haz - el bow'rs, His lay the lin - net pours; The lav'rock to the sky
A-scends, wi' sangs o' joy, While the sun and thou a-rise to bless the day.

(*See* page 33, Vol. VI.)

I allow the first four lines of each stanza to be repeated; but if you inspect the air, in that part, you will find that it also, with a quaver of difference, is the same passages repeated; which will exactly put it on the footing of other slow Scots airs, as they, you know, are twice sung over. If you honor my serenade by setting the air to it, I will vamp up the old song, and make it English enough to be understood. I have sent you my song noted down to the air, in the way I think that it should go; I believe you will find my set of the air to be one of the best.

I enclose you a musical curiosity—an East Indian air, which you would swear was a Scots one. I know the authenticity of it, as the gentleman who brought it over is a particular acquaintance of mine. Do preserve me the copy I send you, as it is the only one I have. Clarke has set a bass to it, and I intend putting it into the *Musical Museum.* Here follow the verses I intend for it :—

THE AULD MAN.


Very Slow.
But late-ly seen in glad-some green, The woods re-joic'd the day,
Thro' gen-tle showers, the laughing flowers In dou-ble pride were gay:
But now our joys are fled On win-ter blasts a-wa;
Yet maid-en May, in rich ar-ray, A-gain shall bring them a'.

(*See* page 35, Vol. VI.)

I would be obliged to you if you would procure me a sight of Ritson's collection of English songs which you mention in your letter. I can return them three times a week by the Fly. The Scottish collection, as I told you, I have got. I will thank you for another information, and that as speedily as you please —whether this miserable, drawling, hotch-potch epistle has not completely tired you of the correspondence of yours, R. Burns.

19th Oct. 1794.

([21]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *27th October*, 1794.

I AM sensible, my dear friend, that a genuine poet can no more exist without his mistress than his meat. I wish I knew the adorable she whose bright eyes and witching smiles have so often enraptured the Scottish bard, that I might drink her sweet health when the toast is going round. "Craigieburn Wood" must certainly be adopted into my family, since she is the subject of the song; but in the name of decency, I must beg a new chorus-verse from you. "O to be lying beyond thee, dearie," is perhaps a consummation to be wished, but will not do for singing in the company of ladies. The songs in your last will do you lasting credit, and suit the respective airs charmingly. I am perfectly of your opinion with respect to the additional airs. The idea of sending them into the world naked as they were born was ungenerous. They must all be clothed and made decent by our friend Clarke.

I find I am anticipated by the friendly Cunningham in sending you Ritson's Scottish collection. Permit me, therefore, to present you with his English collection, which you will receive by the coach. I do not find his historical essay on Scottish song interesting. Your anecdotes and miscellaneous remarks will, I am sure, be much more so. Allan has just sketched a charming design from "Maggie Lauder." She is dancing with such spirit as to electrify the piper, who seems almost dancing too, while he is playing with the most exquisite glee. I am much inclined to get a small copy, and to have it engraved in the style of Ritson's prints.

P.S.—What do your anecdotes say concerning "Maggie Lauder?" Was she a real personage, and of what rank? You would surely speer for her, if you ca'd at Anster town.

G. T.

([39]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*Nov.* 1794.]

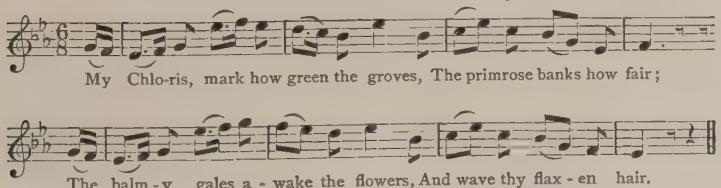
MANY thanks, my dear Sir, for your present; it is a book of the utmost importance to me. I have yesterday begun my anecdotes, &c., for your work. I

intend drawing them up in the form of a letter to you, which will save me from the tedious, dull business of systematic arrangement.* Indeed, as all I have to say consists of unconnected remarks, anecdotes, scraps of old songs, &c., it will be impossible to give the work a beginning, a middle and an end, which the critics insist to be absolutely necessary in a work. As soon as I have a few pages in order, I will send you them as a specimen. I only fear that the matter will grow so large among my hands as to be more expense than you can allot for it. Now for my desultory way of writing you.

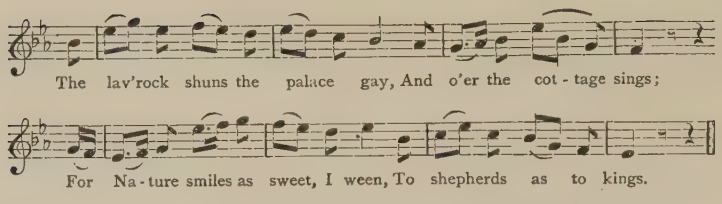
I am happy that I have at last pleased you with verses to your right-hand tune "Cauld Kail." I see a little unpliancy in the line you object to, but cannot alter it for a better. It is one thing to know one's error, and another and much more difficult affair to amend that error. In my last, I told you my objections to the song you had selected for "My lodging is on the cold ground." On my visit the other day to my fair Chloris (that is the poetic name of the lovely goddess of my inspiration), she suggested an idea, which I, on my return from the visit, wrought into the following song. It is exactly in the measure of "My dearie, an thou die," which you say is the precise rhythm of the air :—

SONG.

TUNE—"Away to bonnie Tweedside."


My Chlo-ris, mark how green the groves, The primrose banks how fair;
The balm-y gales a-wake the flowers, And wave thy flax-en hair.

*The paper here referred to seems not to have been completed; and the portion forwarded to Thomson by way of specimen has not been found.



(*See* page 36, Vol. VI.)

How do you like the simplicity and tenderness of this pastoral? I think it pretty well.

I like you for entering so candidly and so kindly into the story of "ma chère amie." I assure you I was never more in earnest in my life, than in the account of that affair which I sent you in my last. Conjugal love is a passion which I deeply feel and highly venerate; but somehow, it does not make such a figure in poesy as that other species of the passion,

"Where love is liberty, and nature law."

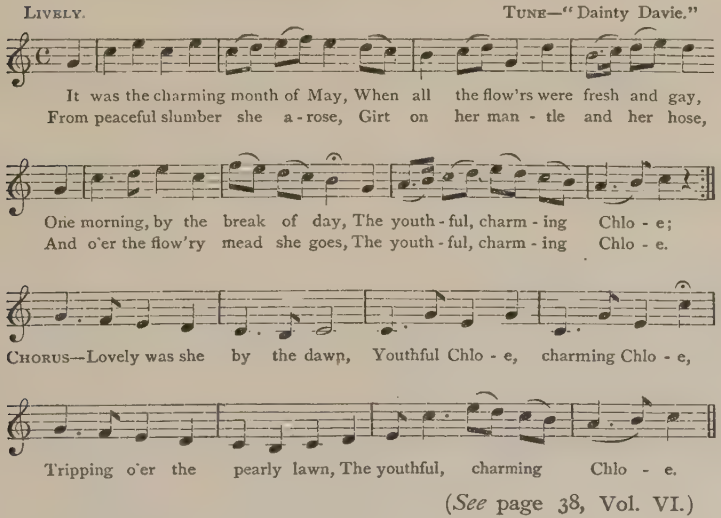
Musically speaking, the first is an instrument of which the gamut is scanty and confined, but the tones inexpressibly sweet, while the last has powers equal to all the intellectual modulation of the human soul. Still, I am a very poet in my enthusiasm of the passion. The welfare and happiness of the beloved object is the *first* and *inviolate* sentiment that pervades my soul; and what pleasures I might wish for, or whatever might be the raptures they would give, yet, if they interfere and clash with that first principle, it is having these pleasures at a dishonest price; and Justice forbids, and Generosity disdains the purchase! As to the herd of the sex who are good for little or nothing else, I have made no such agreement with myself; but where the Parties are capable of, and the Passion is, the true Divinity of Love—the man who can act otherwise is a Villain!

It was impossible, you know, to take up the subject

of your songs in the last sheet: that would have been a falling off indeed!

Despairing of my own powers to give you variety enough in English songs, I have been turning over old collections, to pick out songs of which the measure is something similar to what I want; and with a little alteration, so as to suit the rhythm of the air exactly, to give you them for your work. Where the songs have hitherto been but little noticed, nor have ever been set to music, I think the shift a fair one. A song which, under the same first verse of the first stanza, you will find in Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*, and elsewhere, I have cut down for an English dress to your "Dainty Davy," as follows:

SONG, ALTERED FROM AN OLD ENGLISH ONE.

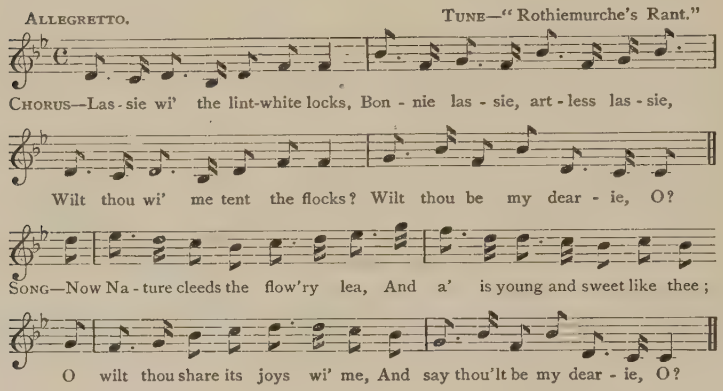

Lively.
Tune—"Dainty Davie."
It was the charming month of May, When all the flow'rs were fresh and gay,
From peaceful slumber she a-rose, Girt on her man-tle and her hose,
One morning, by the break of day, The youth-ful, charm-ing Chlo-e;
And o'er the flow'ry mead she goes, The youth-ful, charm-ing Chlo-e.
Chorus—Lovely was she by the dawn, Youthful Chlo-e, charming Chlo-e,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn, The youthful, charming Chlo-e.

(*See* page 38, Vol. VI.)

You may think meanly of this, but take a look at the bombast original, and you will be surprised that I have made so much of it.

I have finished my song to "Rothiemurche's Rant,"

and you have Clarke to consult as to the set of the air for singing.*


Allegretto.
Tune—"Rothiemurche's Rant."
Chorus—Las-sie wi' the lint-white locks, Bon-nie las-sie, art-less las-sie,
Wilt thou wi' me tent the flocks? Wilt thou be my dear-ie, O?
Song—Now Na-ture cleeds the flow'ry lea, And a' is young and sweet like thee;
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me, And say thou'lt be my dear-ie, O?

(*See* page 39, Vol. VI.)

This piece has at least the merit of being a regular pastoral; the vernal morn, the summer noon, the autumnal evening, and the winter night, are regularly rounded. If you like it, well; if not, I will insert it in the *Museum.*

I am out of temper that you should set so sweet, so tender an air, as "Deil tak the Wars," to the foolish old verses. You talk of the silliness of "Saw ye my Father?" By heavens! the odds is gold to brass. Besides, the old song, though pretty well modernized into the Scottish language, is originally, and in the early editions, a bungling low imitation of the Scots manner, by that genius, Tom D'Urfey, so has no pretensions to be a Scottish production. There is a pretty English song by Sheridan in "The Duenna" to this air, which is out of sight superior to D'Urfey's. It begins—

"When sable night each drooping plant restoring."

The air, if I understand the expression of it properly,

* See page 250, *supra.*

is the very native language of Simplicity, Tenderness, and Love. I have again gone over my song to the tune, as follows—

SONG.

Tune—"Deil tak' the wars."

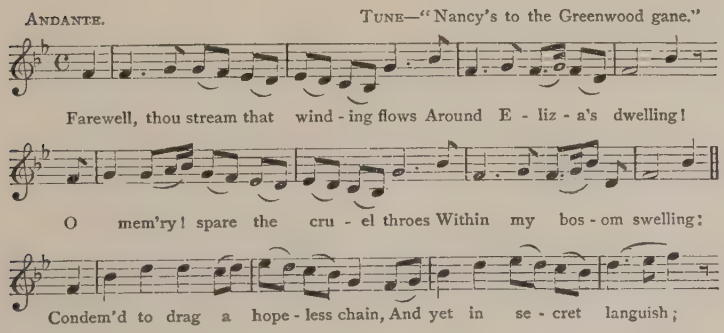
"Sleep'st thou, or wak'st thou, fairest creature?"

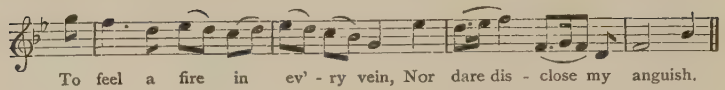
(*See* page 33, Vol. VI.)

I could easily throw this into an English mould; but to my taste, in the simple and tender of the Pastoral song, a sprinkling of the old Scottish has an inimitable effect. You know I never encroach on your privileges as an editor. You may reject my song altogether, and keep by the old one; or you may give mine as a second Scots one; or lastly, you may set the air to my verses, still giving the old song as a second one, and as being well known; in which last case, I would find you, in English verses of my own, a song, the exact rhythm of my Scottish one. If you keep by the old words, Sheridan's song will do for an English one. I once more conjure you to have no manner of false delicacy in accepting or refusing my compositions, either in this or any other of your songs.

Now for my English song to "Nansie's to the Greenwood gane."

SONG.


ANDANTE.
TUNE—"Nancy's to the Greenwood gane."
Farewell, thou stream that wind - ing flows Around E - liz - a's dwelling!
O mem'ry! spare the cru - el throes Within my bos - om swelling:
Condem'd to drag a hope - less chain, And yet in se - cret languish;



(*See* page 44, Vol. VI.)

"Young Jockey was the blythest lad." My English song, "Here is the glen, and here the bower," cannot go to this air. However, the measure is so common, that you may have your choice of five hundred English songs. Do you know the air "Lumps o' Pudding?" It is a favorite of mine, and I think would be worth a place among your additional songs, as soon as several in your list. It is in a measure in which you will find songs enow to choose on; but if you were to adopt it, I would take it in my own hand.

There is an air—"The Caledonian Hunt's Delight," to which I wrote a song that you will find in *Johnson*, "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon;" this air, I think, might find a place among your hundred, as Lear says of his knights. To make room for it you may take out (to my taste) either "Young Jockey was the blythest lad," or "There's nae luck about the house," or "The Collier's bonie lassie," or "The Tither Morn," or "The Sow's Tail;" and put it into your additional list. Not but that these songs have great merit; but still they have not the pathos of "The Banks o' Doon." Do you know the history of the air? It is curious enough. A good many years ago, Mr. James Miller, writer in your good town, a gentleman whom you possibly know, was in company with our friend Clarke, and talking of Scots music, Miller expressed an ardent ambition to be able to compose a Scots air. Mr. Clarke, partly by way of joke, told him to keep to the black keys of the harpsichord, and preserve some kind of rhythm, and he would infallibly compose a Scots air. Certain it is that in a few days, Mr. Miller produced the rudiments of an air, which Mr. Clarke, with a few touches and

corrections, fashioned into the tune in question. Ritson, you know, has the same story of the black keys; but this account which I have just given you, Mr. Clarke informed me of several years ago. Now to show you how difficult it is to trace the origin of our airs, I have heard it repeatedly asserted that it was an Irish air; nay, I met with an Irish gentleman who affirmed he had heard it in Ireland among the old women; while, on the other hand, a lady of fashion, no less than a countess, informed me that the first person who introduced the air into this country was a baronet's lady of her acquaintance, who took down the notes from an itinerant piper in the Isle of Man. How difficult, then, to ascertain the truth respecting our poesy and music! I myself have lately seen a couple of ballads sung through the streets of Dumfries, with my name at the head of them as the author, though it was the first time ever I had seen them.

I thank you for admitting "Craigieburn Wood," and I shall take care to furnish it with a new chorus. In fact the chorus *was* not my work, but part of some old verses to the air. If I can catch myself in a more than ordinary propitious moment, I shall write a new "Craigieburn" altogether. My heart is much in the theme.

I am ashamed, my dear fellow, to make the request —'tis dunning your generosity; but in a moment when I had forgot whether I was rich or poor, I promised Chloris a copy of your songs. It wrings my honest pride to write you this; but an ungracious request is doubly so by a tedious apology. To make amends, as soon as I have extracted the necessary information out of them, I will return you Ritson's volumes.

The lady is not a little proud that she is to make so distinguished a figure in your collection, and I am

not a little proud that I have it in my power to please her so much. On second thoughts, I send you Clarke's singing set of Rothiemurche, which please return me in your first letter: I know it will not suit you.

I have no more post-paper, and it is too late to go to the shop, so you must e'en take an envelope of Excise-paper. Lucky it is for your patience that my paper is done, for when I am in a scribbling humor, I know not when to give over. Adieu!

R. BURNS.

([22]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 15*th Nov.* 1794.

MY GOOD SIR,—Since receiving your last, I have had another interview with Mr. Clarke, and a long consultation. He thinks the "Caledonian Hunt" is more bacchanalian than amorous in its nature, and recommends it to you to match the air accordingly. Pray, did it ever occur to you how peculiarly well the Scottish airs are adapted for verses in the form of a dialogue? The first part of the air is generally low, and suited to a man's voice; and the second part, in many instances, cannot be sung at concert-pitch but by a female voice. A song thus performed makes an agreeable variety, but few of ours are written in this form: I wish you would think of it in some of those that remain. The only one of the kind you have sent is admirable, and will be a universal favorite.

Your verses for "Rothiemurche" are so sweetly pastoral, and your serenade to Chloris, for "Deil tak the wars," so passionately tender, that I have sung myself into raptures with them. Your song for "My Lodging is on the cold ground," is likewise a diamond of the first water; I am quite dazzled and delighted by it. Some of your Chlorises, I suppose, have flaxen hair, from your partiality for this color—else we differ about it; for I could scarcely conceive a woman to be a beauty, on reading that she had lint-white locks.

"Farewell, thou Stream that winding flows," I think excellent, but it is much too serious to come after "Nancy"—at least, it would seem an incongruity to provide the same air with merry Scottish and melancholy English verses! The

more that the two sets of verses resemble each other in their general character, the better. Those you have manufactured for "Dainty Davie" will answer charmingly. I am happy to find you have begun your anecdotes: I care not how long they be, for it is impossible that any thing from your pen can be tedious. Let me beseech you not to use ceremony in telling me when you wish to present any of your friends with the songs; the next carrier will bring you three copies, and you are as welcome to twenty as to a pinch of snuff. G. T.

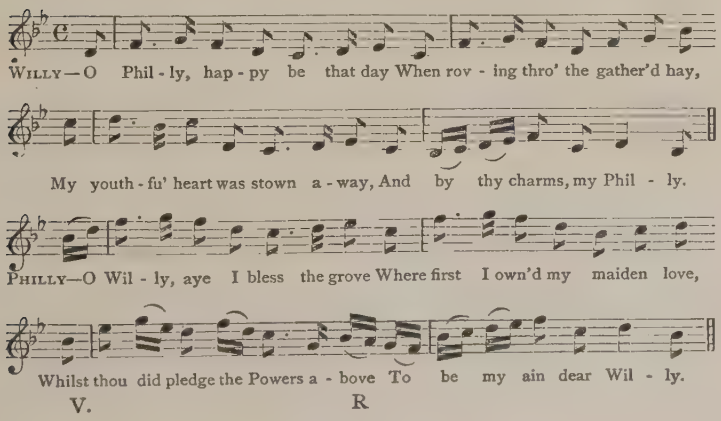
([40]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

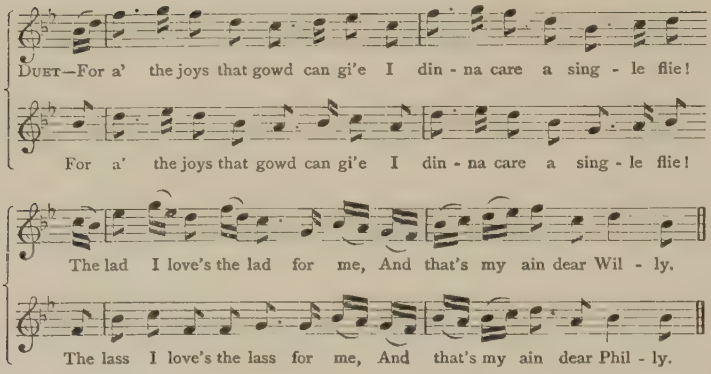
[19*th November* 1794.]

You see, my dear Sir, what a punctual correspondent I am; though indeed you may thank yourself for the tedium of my letters, as you have so flattered me on my horsemanship with my favorite hobby, and have praised the grace of his ambling so much, that I am scarcely off his back. For instance, this morning, though a keen blowing frost, in my walk before breakfast I finished my Duet, which you were pleased to praise so much. Whether I have uniformly succeeded, I will not say; but here it is to you, though it is not an hour old—

SONG.

TUNE—"The Sow's Tail to Geordie."


WILLY—O Phil - ly, hap - py be that day When rov - ing thro' the gather'd hay,
My youth - fu' heart was stown a - way, And by thy charms, my Phil - ly.
PHILLY—O Wil - ly, aye I bless the grove Where first I own'd my maiden love,
Whilst thou did pledge the Powers a - bove To be my ain dear Wil - ly.


Duet—For a' the joys that gowd can gi'e I din - na care a sing - le flie!
For a' the joys that gowd can gi'e I din - na care a sing - le flie!
The lad I love's the lad for me, And that's my ain dear Wil - ly.
The lass I love's the lass for me, And that's my ain dear Phil - ly.

(*See* page 41, Vol. VI.)

Tell me honestly how you like it, and point out whatever you think faulty.

I am much pleased with your idea of singing our songs in alternate stanzas, and regret that you did not hint it to me sooner. In those that remain, I shall have it in my eye. I remember your objections to the name Philly, but it is the common abbreviation of Phillis. Sally, the only other name that suits, has, to my ear, a vulgarity about it which unfits it for any thing except burlesque. The legion of Scottish poetasters of the day, whom your brother-editor, Mr. Ritson, ranks with me as my coevals, have always mistaken vulgarity for simplicity; whereas simplicity is as much èloignèe from vulgarity on the one hand, as from affected point and puerile conceit on the other.

I agree with you as to the air "Craigieburn Wood," that a chorus would in some degree spoil the effect, and shall certainly have none in my projected song to it. It is not, however, a case in point with "Rothemurche;" there, as in "Roy's Wife of Aldivaloch," a chorus, to my taste, goes well enough. As to the chorus going first, you know it is so with "Roy's Wife," as also with "Rothemurche." In fact, in the first part of both tunes, the rhythm is so peculiar and

irregular, and on that irregularity depends so much of their beauty, that we must e'en take them with all their wildness, and humor the verse accordingly. Leaving out the starting-note in both tunes has, I think, an effect that no regularity could counterbalance the want of—

"O Roy's wife of Aldivaloch," &c.
"O lassie wi' the lint-white locks," &c.

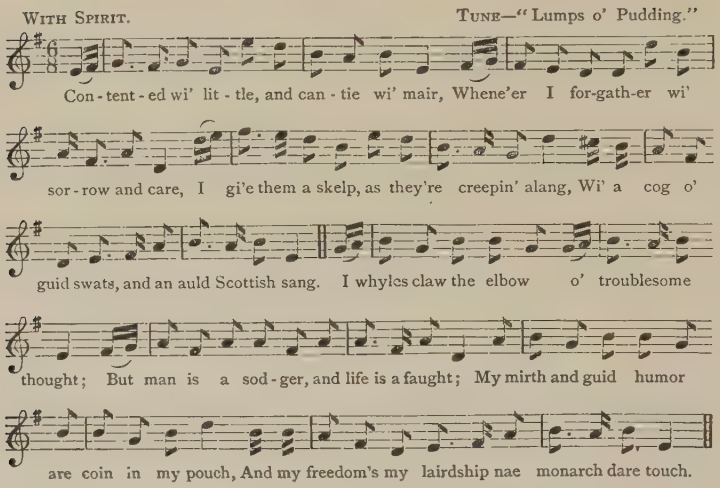
(Compare with)

"Roy's wife of Aldivaloch," &c.
"Lassie wi' the lint-white locks," &c.

Does not the tameness of the prefixed syllable strike you? In the last case, with the true fervor of genius, you strike at once into the wild originality of the air; whereas, in the first insipid business, it is like the grating screw of the pins before the fiddle is brought in tune. This is my taste; if I am wrong, I beg pardon of the *cognoscenti.*

I am also of your mind as to the "Caledonian Hunt;" but to fit it with verses to suit these dotted crotchets will be a task indeed. I differ from you as to the expression of the air. It is so charming, that it would make any subject in a song go down; but pathos is certainly its native tongue. Scots bacchanalians we certainly want, though the few that we have are excellent. For instance, "Todlin Hame" is, for wit and humor, an unparalleled composition; and "Andrew and his cutty gun" is the work of a master. By the way, are you not quite vexed to think that those men of genius, for such they certainly were, who composed our fine Scottish lyrics should be unknown? It has given me many a heartache. Apropos to bacchanalian songs in Scottish, I composed one yesterday, for an air I liked much—"Lumps o' Pudding."

SONG.


With Spirit.
Tune—"Lumps o' Pudding."
Con - tent - ed wi' lit - tle, and can - tie wi' mair, Whene'er I for-gath-er wi'
sor - row and care, I gi'e them a skelp, as they're creepin' alang, Wi' a cog o'
guid swats, and an auld Scottish sang. I whyles claw the elbow o' troublesome
thought; But man is a sod - ger, and life is a faught; My mirth and guid humor
are coin in my pouch, And my freedom's my lairdship nae monarch dare touch.

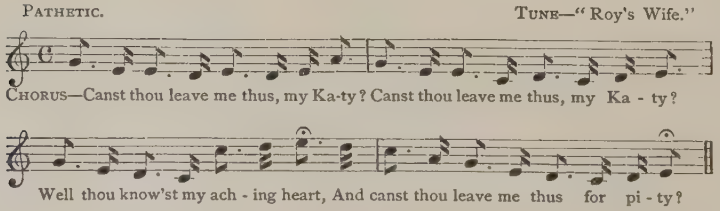
(*See* page 43, Vol. VI.)

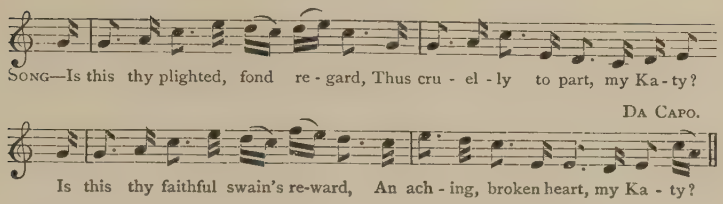
If you do not relish the air, I will send it to Johnson.

The two songs you saw in Clarke's are neither of them worth your attention. The words of "Auld Lang Syne" are good, but the music is an old air, the rudiments of the modern tune of that name. The other tune you may hear as a common Scots country dance.

20th Nov.—Since yesterday's penmanship I have framed a couple of English stanzas, by way of an English song to "Roy's Wife." You will allow me that in this instance my English corresponds in sentiment with the Scottish.

SONG.


Pathetic.
Tune—"Roy's Wife."
Chorus—Canst thou leave me thus, my Ka-ty? Canst thou leave me thus, my Ka - ty?
Well thou know'st my ach - ing heart, And canst thou leave me thus for pi - ty?


Song—Is this thy plighted, fond re - gard, Thus cru - el - ly to part, my Ka - ty?
Da Capo.
Is this thy faithful swain's re-ward, An ach - ing, broken heart, my Ka - ty?

(*See* page 45, Vol. VI.)

Well! I think this, to be done in two or three turns across my room, and with two or three pinches of Irish blackguard, is not far amiss. You see I am determined to have my quantum of applause from somebody.

Now for "When she cam ben she bobbit."

SONG.

Tune—"When she cam ben she bobbit."

Oh saw ye my dear, my Mary?
Oh saw ye my dear, my Mary?
She's down i' the grove, she's wi' a new Love,
She winna come hame to her Harry, &c.

(*See* page 31, Vol. VI.)

I think these names will answer better than the former, and the rhythm of the song is as you desired.

I dislike your proposed alterations in two instances. "Logie o' Buchan," and "There's my thumb, I'll ne'er beguile thee," are certainly fittest for your additional songs; and in their place, as two of the hundred, I would put the most beautiful airs—"Whistle and I'll come t' ye, my lad," at all rates, as one. It is surely highly capable of feeling and sentiment, and the song is one of my best. For the other, keep your favorite "Muirland Willie," and with it close your hundred. As for the first being Irish, all that you can say is, that it has a twang of the Irish manner; but to infer from that, that it must of course be an Irish production, is unfair. In the neighborhood and

intercourse of the Scots and Irish—and both musical nations too—it is highly probable that composers of one nation would sometimes imitate and emulate the manner of the other. I never met with an Irishman who claimed this air, a pretty strong proof that it is Scottish. Just the same is the case with "Gramachree:" if it be really Irish, it is decidedly in the Scottish taste. The other one in your collection, "Oran Gaoil," which you think is Irish, they claim as theirs by the name of "Caun du delish;" but look into your publications of Scottish songs, and you will find it as a Gaelic song, with the words in that language, a wretched translation of which original words is set to the tune in the *Museum*. Your worthy Gaelic priest gave me that translation, and at his table I heard both the original and the translation sung by a large party of Highland gentlemen, all of whom had no other idea of the air than that it was a native of their own country.

I am obliged to you for your goodness in your three copies, but will certainly return you two of them. Why should I take money out of your pocket?

Tell my friend Allan (for I am sure that we only want the trifling circumstance of being known to one another to be the best friends on earth) that I much suspect he has in his plates mistaken the figure of the stock and horn. I have at last gotten one, but it is a very rude instrument. It is composed of three parts: the stock, which is the hinder thigh bone of a sheep, such as you see in a mutton ham; the horn, which is a common Highland cow's horn, cut off at the smaller end until the aperture be large enough to admit the stock to be pushed up through the horn until it be held by the thicker end of the thigh bone; and lastly, an oaten reed, exactly cut and notched like that which you see every shepherd boy have when the corn stems are green and full grown. The reed is not

made fast in the bone, but is held by the lips, and plays loose in the smaller end of the stock, while the stock and horn hanging on its larger end is held by the hands in playing. The stock has six or seven ventiges on the upper side, and one back ventige, like the common flute. This of mine was made by a man from the braes of Athole, and is exactly what the shepherds wont to use in that country.

However, either it is not quite properly bored in the holes, or else we have not the art of blowing it rightly, for we can make little of it. If Mr. Allan chooses I will send him a sight of mine, as I look on myself to be a kind of brother brush with him. "Pride in poets is nae sin;" and I will say it that I look on Mr. Allan and Mr. Burns to be the only genuine and real painters of Scottish costume in the world. Farewell! R. BURNS.

([23]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *28th Nov.* 1794.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, my dear Sir, you are not only the most punctual, but the most delectable correspondent I ever met with. To attempt flattering you never entered into my head; the truth is, I look back with surprise at my imprudence, in so frequently nibbling at lines and couplets of your incomparable lyrics, for which, perhaps, if you had served me right, you would have sent me to the devil. On the contrary, however, you have all along condescended to invite my criticism with so much courtesy, that it ceases to be wonderful if I have sometimes given myself the airs of a reviewer. Your last budget demands unqualified praise: all the songs are charming, but the Duet is a *chef-d'œuvre*. "Lumps o' pudding" shall certainly make one of my family-dishes; you have cooked it so capitally that it will please all palates. Do give us a few more of this cast when you find yourself in good spirits; these convivial songs are more wanted than those of the amorous kind; of which we have great choice, besides one does not often meet with a singer capable of giving the proper effect to

the latter, while the former are easily sung, and acceptable to everybody. I participate in your regret that the authors of some of our best songs are unknown: it is provoking to every admirer of genius.

I mean to have a picture painted from your beautiful ballad, "The Soldier's Return," to be engraved for one of my frontispieces. The most interesting point of time appears to me when she first recognises her "ain dear Willy,"

"She gazed, she redden'd like a rose:"

the three lines immediately following are no doubt more impressive on the reader's feelings; but were the painter to fix on these, then you'll observe the animation and anxiety of her countenance is gone, and he could only represent her fainting in the soldier's arms. But I submit the matter to you, and beg your opinion.

Allan desires me to thank you for your accurate description of the stock and horn, and for the very gratifying compliments you pay him, in considering him worthy of standing in a niche by the side of Burns in the Scottish Pantheon. He has seen the rude instrument you describe, so does not want you to send it; but wishes to know whether you believe it to have ever been generally used as a musical pipe by the Scottish Shepherds, and when, and in what part of the country chiefly. I doubt much if it was capable of anything but routing and roaring. A friend of mine says he remembers to have heard one in his younger days, made of wood instead of your bone, and that the sound was abominable.

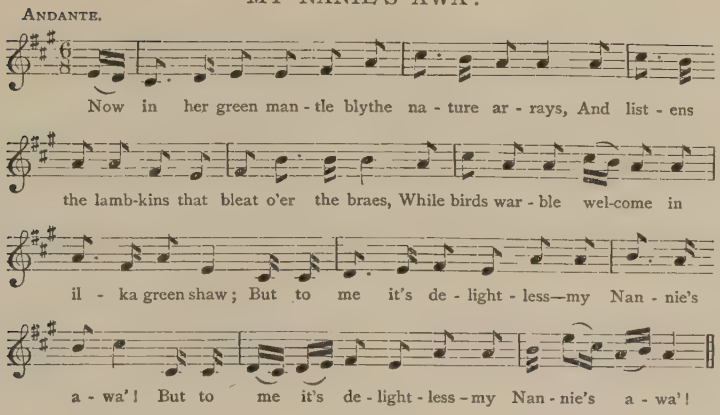
Do not, I beseech you, return the books. G. T.

([41]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

December 9th, 1794.

My Dear Sir,—It is, I assure you, the pride of my heart to do anything to forward, or add to the value of your books; and as I agree with you that the Jacobite song in the *Museum* to "There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame," would not so well consort with Peter Pindar's excellent love song to that air, I have just framed for you the following:

MY NANIE'S AWA'.


ANDANTE.
Now in her green man - tle blythe na - ture ar - rays, And list - ens
the lamb-kins that bleat o'er the braes, While birds war - ble wel-come in
il - ka green shaw; But to me it's de - light - less—my Nan - nie's
a - wa'! But to me it's de - light - less - my Nan - nie's a - wa'!

(*See* page 46, Vol. VI.)

How does this please you? I have thought that a song in Ramsay's collection beginning "Come fill me a bumper, my jolly brave boys," might do as an English song for "Todlin' hame." It might do thus:—

"Come fill me a bumper, my jolly brave boys,
Let's have no more of female impert'nence and noise;
I've tried the endearments and witchcraft of love,
And found them but nonsense and whimsies, by Jove!

Chorus—Truce with your love! no more of your love!
The bottle henceforth is my mistress, by Jove!"

As to the point of time for the expression, in your proposed print from my "Soger's Return," it must certainly be at "She gazed." The interesting dubiety and suspense taking possession of her countenance, and the gushing fondness, with a mixture of playfulness in her, strike me as a subject of which a master will make a great deal. In great haste, but in great truth,—Yours, R. B.

([42]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

January 1795.

My Dear Sir,—I fear for my songs, however a few may please; yet originality is a coy feature in composition, and, in a multiplicity of efforts in the same style, disappears altogether. For these three thousand years, we poetic folks have been describing the Spring, for instance, and as the Spring continues the same, there must soon be a sameness in the imagery, &c., of these said rhyming folks. To wander a little from my first design, which was to give you a new song, just hot from the mint, give me leave to squeeze in a clever anecdote of my *Spring* originality:—

Some years ago, when I was young, and by no means the saint I am now, I was looking over, in company with a *belle-lettre* friend, a magazine "Ode to Spring," when my friend fell foul of the recurrence of the same thoughts, and offered me a bet that it was impossible to produce an ode to Spring on an original plan. I accepted it, and pledged myself to bring in the verdant fields, the budding flowers, the crystal streams, the melody of the groves, and a love story into the bargain, and yet be original. Here follows the piece, and wrote to music too!

ODE TO SPRING.

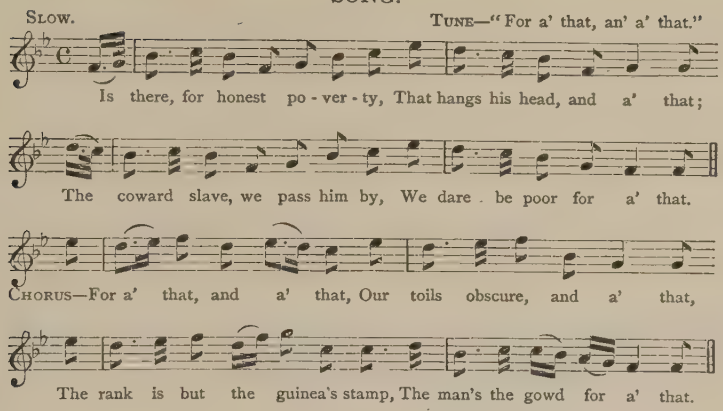
Tune—"The tither morn," &c.

"When mauken bucks," &c.

(*See* page 56, Vol. IV.)

A great critic (Aikin) on song says, that Love and Wine are the exclusive themes for song-writing. The following is on neither subject, and consequently is no song; but will be allowed, I think, to be two or three pretty good prose thoughts inverted into rhyme:

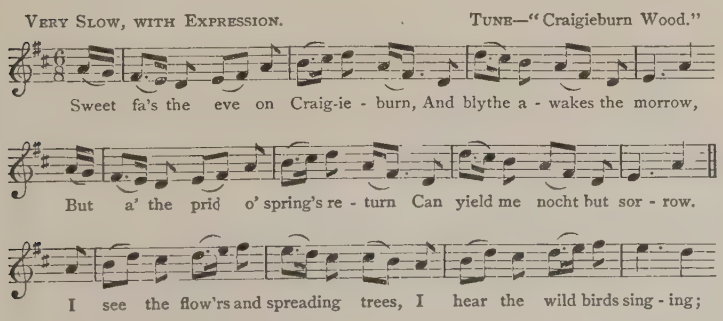
SONG.

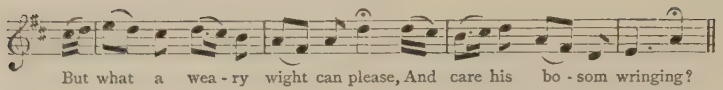

Slow.
Tune—"For a' that, an' a' that."
Is there, for honest po - ver - ty, That hangs his head, and a' that;
The coward slave, we pass him by, We dare be poor for a' that.
Chorus—For a' that, and a' that, Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp, The man's the gowd for a' that.

(*See* page 50, Vol. VI.)

Jan. 15*th.*—The foregoing has lain by me this fortnight, for want of a spare moment. The Supervisor of Excise here being ill, I have been acting for him, and I assure you I have hardly five minutes to myself to thank you for your elegant present of Pindar. The typography is admirable, and worthy of the truly original bard.

I do not give you the foregoing song for your book, but merely by way of *vive la bagatelle;* for the piece is not really poetry. How will the following do for "Craigieburn Wood?"—


Very Slow, with Expression.
Tune—"Craigieburn Wood."
Sweet fa's the eve on Craig-ie - burn, And blythe a - wakes the morrow,
But a' the prid o' spring's re - turn Can yield me nocht but sor - row.
I see the flow'rs and spreading trees, I hear the wild birds sing - ing;



(*See* page 52, Vol. VI.)

Farewell! God bless ye! R. B.

([24]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 30*th Jan.* 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—I thank you heartily for "Nannie's Awa," as well as for "Craigieburn," which I think a very comely pair. Your observation on the difficulty of original writing in a number of efforts in the same style, strikes me very forcibly; and it has again and again excited my wonder to find you continually surmounting this difficulty, in the many delightful songs you have sent me. Your *vive la bagatelle* song, "For a' that," shall undoubtedly be included in my list.

G. T.

([43]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[DUMFRIES, 6*th February* 1795.]*

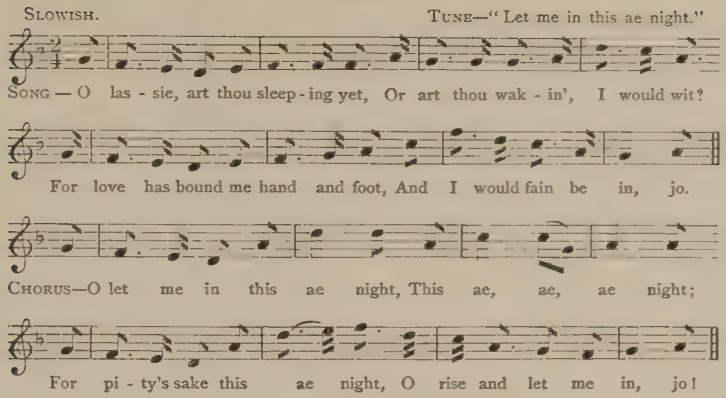
I AM afraid, my dear Sir, that printing your songs in the manner of Ritson's would counteract the sale of your greater work; but secluded as I am from the world, its humors and caprices, I cannot pretend to judge in the matter. If you are ultimately frustrated of Pleyel's assistance, what think you of applying to Clarke? This, you will say, would be breaking faith with your subscribers; but, bating that circumstance, I am confident that Clarke is equal, in Scottish song, to take up the pen even after Pleyel.

I shall, at a future period, write you my sentiments as to sending my bagatelles to a newspaper.

Here is another trial at your favorite air:—

* Through some delay in posting, this letter did not reach Edinburgh till 9th Feb.

SONG.


Slowish.
Tune—"Let me in this ae night."
Song — O las - sie, art thou sleep - ing yet, Or art thou wak - in', I would wit?
For love has bound me hand and foot, And I would fain be in, jo.
Chorus—O let me in this ae night, This ae, ae, ae night;
For pi - ty's sake this ae night, O rise and let me in, jo!

(*See* page 63, Vol. VI.)*

I do not know whether it will do. Yours ever,

R. B.

(44) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

Ecclefechan, *7th February* 1795.

My Dear Thomson,—You cannot have any idea of the predicament in which I write you. In the course of my duty as supervisor (in which capacity I have acted of late) I came yesternight to this unfortunate, wicked little village.† I have gone forward, but snows of ten feet deep have impeded my progress; I have tried to "gae back the gate I cam again," but the same obstacle has shut me up within insu-

---

* The MS. contains the following, as verse third of the lover's part of the song; but the poet writes on the margin thus:—"I do not know but this stanza may as well be omitted.—*R. B.*"

"Thy kith and kin look down on me,
A simple lad o' low degree;
Sae I maun try frae love to flee,
Across the raging main, jo."

These lines seem like the reflection of his own experience in 1786.

† Dr. Currie has a note here:—"The poet must have been tipsy indeed to abuse sweet Ecclefechan so."

perable bars. To add to my misfortune, since dinner, a scraper has been torturing catgut, in sounds that would have insulted the dying agonies of a sow under the hands of a butcher, and thinks himself, *on that very account*, exceedingly good company. In fact, I have been in a dilemma, either to get drunk, to forget these miseries; or to hang myself, to get rid of them; like a prudent man (a character congenial to my every thought, word, and deed), I, of two evils, have chosen the least, and am very drunk at your service! *

I wrote you yesterday from Dumfries. I had not time *then* to tell you all I wanted to say; and, heaven knows, at present I have not capacity.

Do you know an air—I am sure you must know it—"We'll gang na mair to yon town?" I think, in slowish time, it would make an excellent song. I am highly delighted with it; and if you should think it worthy of your attention, I have a fair dame in my eye to whom I would consecrate it; try it with this doggrel, until I give you a better. You will find a good set of it in Bowie's collection.

"*Chorus*—O wat ye wha's in yon town,
Ye see the e'enin sun upon;
The dearest maid's in yon town
That e'enin sun is shinin on.

"O sweet to me yon spreading tree,
Where Jeanie wanders aft her lane;
The hawthorn flower that shades her bower,
O when shall I behold again?
"O wat ye wha's," &c.

As I am just going to bed, I wish you a good night. R. B.

* Thomson also has appended a note thus:—"The handwriting shows it, and I can swear to the truth.—G. T."

P.S.—As I am likely to be storm-stead here to-morrow, if I am in the humor, you shall have a long letter from me. R. B.

([25]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 25*th February* 1795.

I HAVE to thank you, my dear Sir, for two epistles—one containing "Let me in this ae night," and the other from Ecclefechan, proving that, drunk or sober, your "mind is never muddy." You have displayed great address in the above song. Her answer is excellent, and at the same time takes away the indelicacy that otherwise would have attached to his entreaties. I like the song, as it stands, very much.

I had hopes you would be arrested some days at Ecclefechan, and be obliged to beguile the tedious forenoons by song-making. It will give me pleasure to receive the verses you intend for "O wat ye wha's in yon town?" G. T.

([45]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*April* 1795.]

SONG.

Tune—"We'll gang nae mair to yon town."

"O wat ye wha's in yon town,
Ye see the e'enin sun upon?
The fairest Dame's in yon town
That e'enin sun is shinin on," &c.

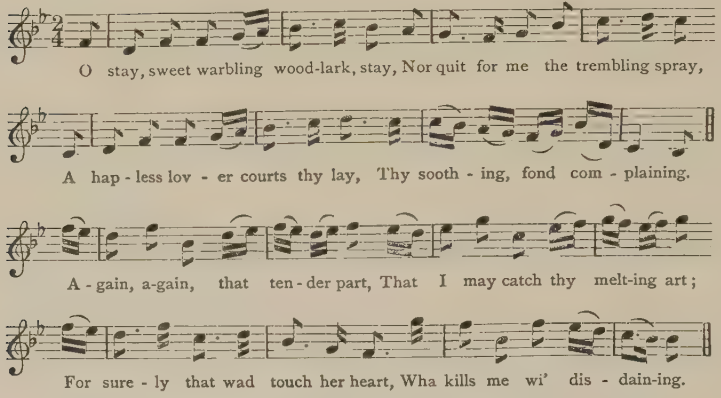
(*See* page 67, Vol. VI.)

Your objection to the last two stanzas of my song, "Let me in this ae night," does not strike me as just. You will take notice that my heroine is replying quite at her ease, and when she talks of "faithless man," she gives not the least reason to believe that she speaks from her own experience, but merely from observation, of what she has seen around her. But of all boring matters in this boring world, criticising my own works is the greatest bore.

SONG.

Tune—"Where'll bonie Ann lie?" *

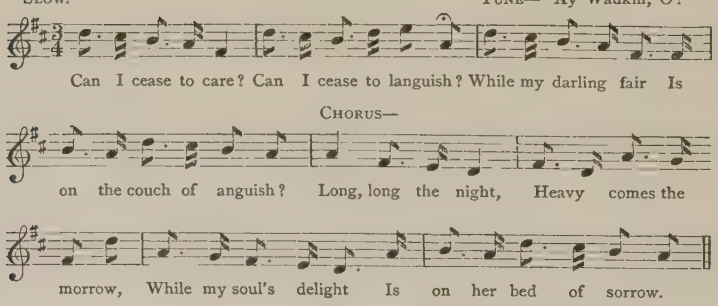
ANDANTE. TUNE—"Loch-Erroch Side."


O stay, sweet warbling wood-lark, stay, Nor quit for me the trembling spray,
A hap - less lov - er courts thy lay, Thy sooth - ing, fond com - plaining.
A - gain, a-gain, that ten - der part, That I may catch thy melt-ing art;
For sure - ly that wad touch her heart, Wha kills me wi' dis - dain-ing.

(*See* page 88, Vol. VI.)

SONG ON CHLORIS BEING ILL.

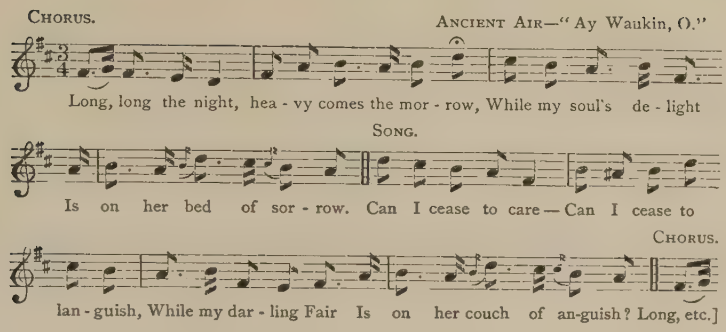
SLOW. TUNE—"Ay Waukin, O!"


Can I cease to care? Can I cease to languish? While my darling fair Is
CHORUS—
on the couch of anguish? Long, long the night, Heavy comes the
morrow, While my soul's delight Is on her bed of sorrow.

(*See* page 89, Vol. VI.)

[Considerable uncertainty exists as to where the best set of this air is to be found—no two collections showing it in the same form. We therefore annex what we believe to be the pure melody, avoiding the absurdity of adding two or three unmeaning words and notes (Ay waukin O!) to make each verse end on the key-note.]

* A still better tune would be "Loch Erroch Side," the rhythm of which it suits better than the drawling stuff in the *Museum*.—*R. B.*

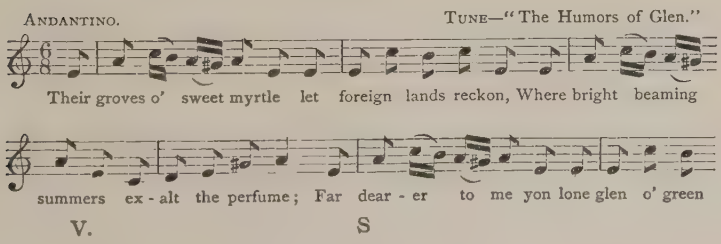

Chorus.
Ancient Air—"Ay Waukin, O."
Long, long the night, hea - vy comes the mor - row, While my soul's de - light
Song.
Is on her bed of sor - row. Can I cease to care — Can I cease to
Chorus.
lan - guish, While my dar - ling Fair Is on her couch of an-guish? Long, etc.]

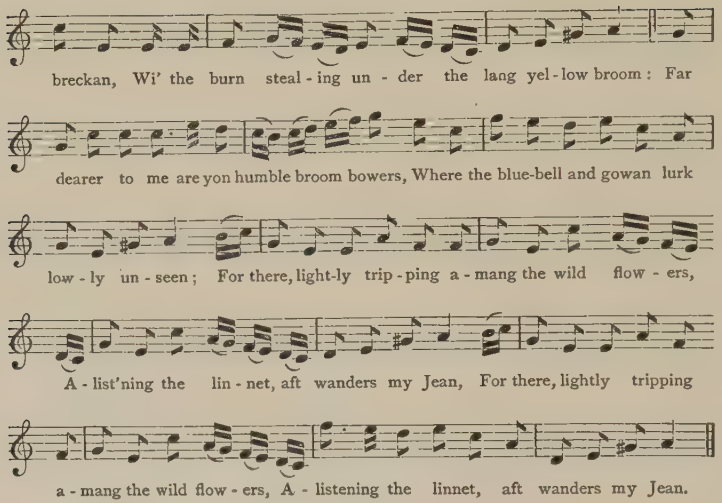
How do you like the foregoing? As to my address to the woodlark, "Johnie Cope" is an air would do it very well; still, whether it be the association of ideas, I cannot say, but there is a squalidity, an absence of elegance in the sentiment and expression of that air that does not altogether suit the spirit and delicacy I have endeavored to transfuse into the song.

As to English verses for "Craigieburn," you have them in Ritson's English selection, vol. 1st, song 22nd, by Sir Walter Raleigh, beginning

"Wrong not, sweet mistress of my heart."

The "Lammy" is an air that I do not much like. "Laddie, lie near me," I am busy with, and in general, have them all in my eye. The Irish air "Humors of Glen" is a great favorite of mine, and as, except the silly verses in the "Poor Soldier," there are not any decent words for it, I have written for it as follows:

SONG.

Andantino.
Tune—"The Humors of Glen."
Their groves o' sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon, Where bright beaming
summers ex - alt the perfume; Far dear - er to me yon lone glen o' green


breckan, Wi' the burn steal - ing un - der the lang yel - low broom: Far
dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers, Where the blue-bell and gowan lurk
low - ly un - seen; For there, light-ly trip - ping a - mang the wild flow - ers,
A - list'ning the lin - net, aft wanders my Jean, For there, lightly tripping
a - mang the wild flow - ers, A - listening the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

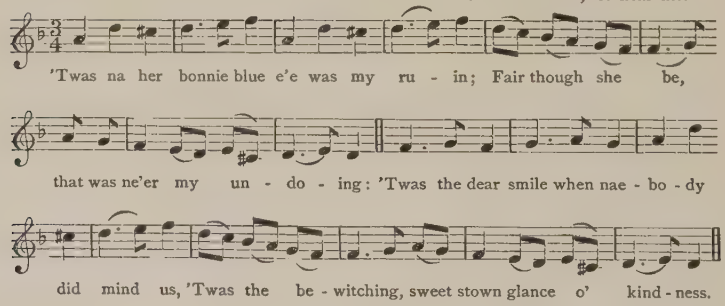
(*See* page 94, Vol. VI.)

Yours, R. B.

[Stop! turn over.]

SONG.

SLOW. TUNE—"Laddie, lie near me."


'Twas na her bonnie blue e'e was my ru - in; Fair though she be,
that was ne'er my un - do - ing: 'Twas the dear smile when nae - bo - dy
did mind us, 'Twas the be - witching, sweet stown glance o' kind - ness.

(*See* page 92, Vol. VI.)

Let me hear from you. R. B.

([26]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *May* 1795.

YOU must not think, my good Sir, that I have any intention to enhance the value of my gift when I say, in justice to the ingenious and worthy artist, that the design and execution of "The Cotter's Saturday Night" is, in my opinion, one of the happiest productions of Allan's pencil. I shall be grievously disappointed if you are not quite pleased with it.

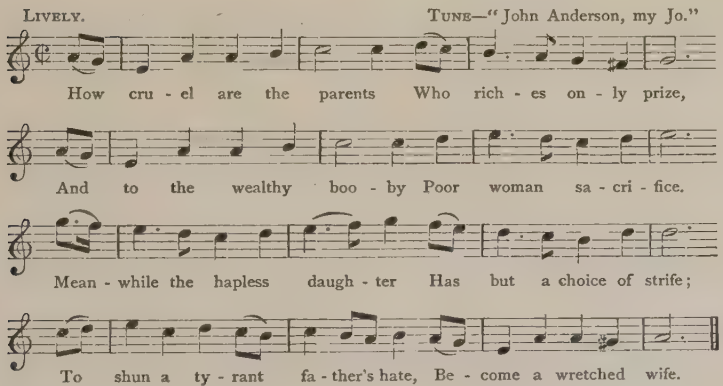
The figure intended for your portrait, I think strikingly like you, as far as I can remember the phiz.* This should make the piece interesting to your family every way. Tell me whether Mrs. Burns finds you out among the figures.

I cannot express the feeling of admiration with which I have read your pathetic "Address to the Woodlark," your elegant panegyric on Caledonia, and your affecting verses on Chloris's illness. Every repeated perusal of these gives new delight. The other song to "Laddie, lie near me," though not equal to these, is very pleasing. G. T.

([46]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

May 9, 1795.

SONG, ALTERED FROM AN OLD ENGLISH ONE.

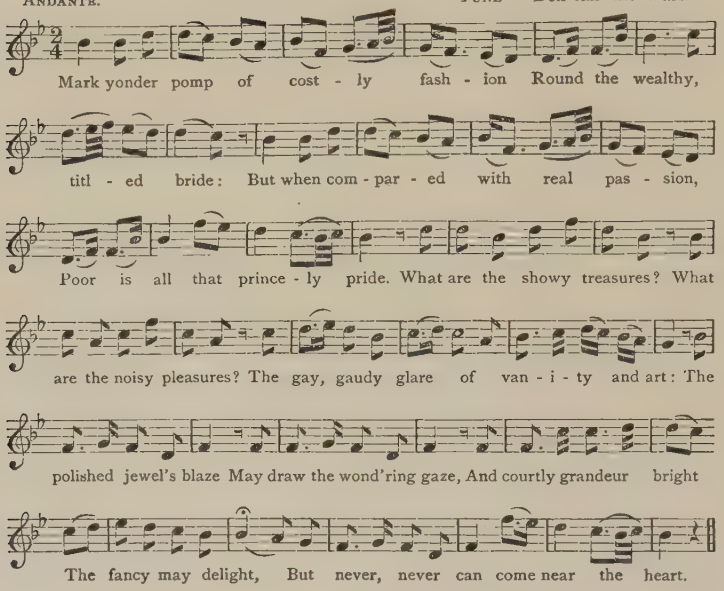

LIVELY.
TUNE—"John Anderson, my Jo."
How cru - el are the parents Who rich - es on - ly prize,
And to the wealthy boo - by Poor woman sa - cri - fice.
Mean - while the hapless daugh - ter Has but a choice of strife;
To shun a ty - rant fa - ther's hate, Be - come a wretched wife.

(*See* page 90, Vol. VI.)

* That is to say—"As I remember the phiz in Beugo's engraving from Nasmyth's picture;" for he never saw Burns in the flesh.

SONG.

ANDANTE. TUNE—"Deil tak' the Wars."


Mark yonder pomp of cost - ly fash - ion Round the wealthy,
titl - ed bride: But when com - par - ed with real pas - sion,
Poor is all that prince - ly pride. What are the showy treasures? What
are the noisy pleasures? The gay, gaudy glare of van - i - ty and art: The
polished jewel's blaze May draw the wond'ring gaze, And courtly grandeur bright
The fancy may delight, But never, never can come near the heart.

(*See* page 91, Vol. VI.)

Well! this is not amiss. You see how I answer your orders—your tailor could not be more punctual. I am just now in a high fit of poetising, provided that the strait-jacket of Criticism don't cure me. If you can, in a post or two, administer a little of the intoxicating potion of your applause, it will raise your humble servant's frenzy to any height you want. I am at this moment "holding high converse" with the Muses, and have not a word to throw away on such a Prosaic dog as you are. R. B.

(47) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*May* 1795.]

TEN thousand thanks for your elegant present,* though I am ashamed of the value of it being bestowed on a man who has not by any means merited such an instance of kindness. I have shown it to two or three judges of the first abilities here, and they all agree with me in classing it a first-rate production. My phiz is sae kenspeckle, that the very joiner's apprentice whom Mrs. Burns employed to break up the parcel (I was out of town that day), knew it at once. You may depend on my care that no persons shall have it in their power to take the least sketch from it. My most grateful compl'nts to Allan, that he has honored my rustic Muse so much with his masterly pencil. One strange coincidence is that the little one who is making the felonious attempt on the cat's tail, is the most striking likeness of an ill-deedie, damned wee, rumble-gairie hurchin of mine, whom, from that propensity to witty wickedness and manfu' mischief, which, even at twa days auld, I foresaw would form the striking features of his disposition, I named "Willie Nicol," after a certain friend of mine, who is one of the masters of a Grammar-school in a city which shall be nameless. Several people think that Allan's likeness of me is more striking than Nasmyth's, for which I sat to him half-a-dozen times. However, there is an artist of very considerable merit just now in this town, who has hit the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment, that I think ever was taken of anybody.†

* A water-color drawing by David Allan, the subject taken from the "Cotter's Saturday Night."

† The question regarding the several miniature likenesses of Burns that were executed during his latter days, is discussed in Vol. VI. We have the pleasure to present the reader with an engraving from the portrait referred to, Burns aged 36.

It is a small miniature, and as it will be in your town getting itself be-crystalized, &c., I have some thoughts of suggesting to you to prepare a vignette taken from it, to my song "Contented wi' little, and cantie wi' mair," in order the portrait of my face and the picture of my mind may go down the stream of Time together.

Now to business. I enclose you a song of merit, to a well known air, which is to be one of yours. It was written by a lady, and has never yet seen the press. If you like it better than the ordinary "Woo'd and married," or if you choose to insert this also you are welcome; only, return me the copy. "The Lothian Lassie" I also enclose; the song is well known, but was never in notes before. The first part is the old tune. It is a great favorite of mine, and here I have the honor of being of the same opinion with STANDARD CLARKE. I think it would make a fine andante ballad.

Give the enclosed epigram to my much-valued friend, Mr. Cunningham, and tell him, that on Wednesday I go to visit a friend of his, to whom his friendly partiality in speaking of the Bard, in a manner, introduced me. I mean a well known Military and Literary character, Colonel Dirom. As to what you hint of my coming to Edinburgh, I know of no such arrangement.*

You do not tell me how you liked my last two songs? Are they condemned? Yours, R. B.

---

*The reference here is to a plan which some of the poet's friends had proposed to the Commissioners of Excise, "to appoint him to a respectable office at Leith, with an easy duty, and with emoluments rising nearly to 200*l.* per annum." Professor Walker, in his biography of Burns, mentions such a proposal as having been on the *tapis* for the benefit of the bard. "But," he adds, "all the friendly designs of his patron (Mr. Graham of Fintry) were frustrated by the imprudence of the poet, and by that ill luck which, in his case, made every act of imprudence create more than its adequate measure of punishment. Burns stood on a lofty eminence, surrounded by enemies as well as by friends, and no indiscretion which he committed was suffered to escape."—*Perth Edition*, 1811, page xcvii., Vol. I.

([27]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, 13*th May* 1795.

IT gives me great pleasure to find that you are all so well satisfied with Mr. Allan's production. The chance resemblance of your little fellow, whose promising disposition appeared so very early, and suggested whom he should be named after, is curious enough. I am acquainted with that person, who is a prodigy of learning and genius, and a pleasant fellow, though no saint.

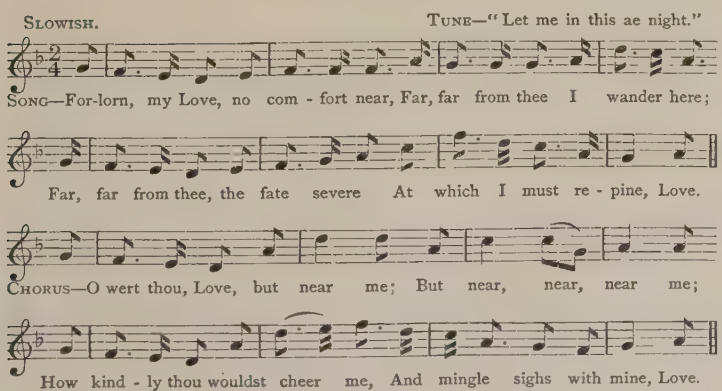
You really make me blush when you tell me you have not merited the drawing from me. I do not think I can ever repay you, or sufficiently esteem or respect you, for the liberal and kind manner in which you have entered into the spirit of my undertaking, which could not have been perfected without you. So I beg you will not make a fool of me again by speaking of obligation.

I like your two last songs very much, and am happy to find you are in such a high fit of poetising. Long may it last! Clarke has made a fine pathetic air to Mallet's superlative ballad of "William and Margaret," and is to give it to me, to be enrolled among the elect. G. T.

([48]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*June* 1795.]

SONG.


SLOWISH.
TUNE—"Let me in this ae night."
SONG—For-lorn, my Love, no com - fort near, Far, far from thee I wander here;
Far, far from thee, the fate severe At which I must re - pine, Love.
CHORUS—O wert thou, Love, but near me; But near, near, near me;
How kind - ly thou wouldst cheer me, And mingle sighs with mine, Love.

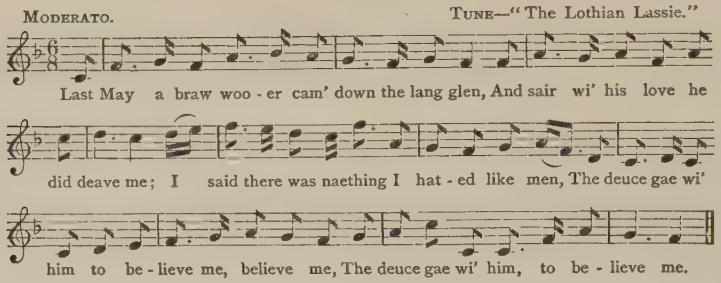
(*See* page 95, Vol. VI.)

How do you like the foregoing? I have written it within this hour: so much for the *speed* of my Pegasus; but what say you to his bottom? R. B.

(49) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*July 3rd*, 1795.]

SCOTS BALLAD.


Moderato.
Tune—"The Lothian Lassie."
Last May a braw woo - er cam' down the lang glen, And sair wi' his love he
did deave me; I said there was naething I hat - ed like men, The deuce gae wi'
him to be - lieve me, believe me, The deuce gae wi' him, to be - lieve me.

(*See* page 97, Vol. VI.)

FRAGMENT.

Tune—"The Caledonian Hunt's Delight."

Why, why tell the lover,
Bliss he never must enjoy?
Why, why undeceive him,
And give all his hopes the lie?

O why, while Fancy, raptur'd, slumbers—
Chloris, Chloris, all the theme—
Why, why wouldst thou, cruel
Wake thy lover from his dream?*

Such is the damned peculiarity of the rhythm of this air, that I find it impossible to make another stanza to suit it.

"This is no my ain house" puzzles me a good deal; in fact I think to change the old rhythm of the first, or chorus part of the tune, will have a good effect. I would have it something like the gallop of the following:

* Thomson has a marginal note here, thus:—"Instead of this poor song I will take the one, 'Ye Banks and Braes o' bonie Doon" for the Air here mentioned. But I propose attaching this to some other Air, if I find one to suit it.—G. T."

SONG.

Tune—"This is no my ain house."

Chorus—O this is nae my ain Body,
Fair tho' the Body be;
O weel ken I my ain Body,
Kind love is in her e'e.

I see a form, I see a face,
Ye weel may wi' the fairest place;
It wants to me the witching grace,
The kind love that's in her e'e.
O this is nae my ain, &c.

I am at present quite occupied with the charming sensations of the toothache, so have not a word to spare.* I know your letters come post-free to you, so I trouble you with the enclosed, which, as it is a business letter, please cause to be delivered at first convenience. Yours, R. BURNS.

([28]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *3rd July*, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your English verses to "Let me in this ae night" are tender and beautiful; and your ballad to the "Lothian Lassie" is a master-piece for its humor and naïveté. The fragment for the "Caledonian Hunt" is quite suited to the original measure of the air, and as it plagues you so, the fragment must content it. I would rather, as I said before, have had bacchanalian words, had it so pleased the poet; nevertheless, for what we have received, Lord, make us thankful! G. T.

([50]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

August 2d, 1795.

YOUR objection is just as to the verse of my song [Forlorn, my Love]. I hope the following alteration will please you:—

* The poet's letter of 30th May 1795 to Mr. Creech makes a similar allusion to being troubled with the toothache, a disease which he so well describes in one of his poems so early as 1789. See page 126, Vol. III.

Cold, alter'd friends, with cruel art,
Poisoning fell Misfortune's dart—
Let me not break thy faithful heart,
And say that fate is mine, love.

Did I mention to you that I wish to alter the first line of the English song "Leiger 'm choss," alias "The Quaker's Wife," from

Thine am I, my faithful Fair,

to

Thine am I, my Chloris fair?

If you neglect the alteration, I call on all the NINE, conjunctly and severally, to anathematise you.*

In "Whistle and I'll come to you, my Lad," the iteration of that line is tiresome to my ear—here goes the old first four lines of every stanza, and then follows what I think is an improvement :—

O whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad,
O whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad,
Tho' father and mother and a' should gae mad,
O whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad.

alter to

O whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad,
O whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad,
Tho' father and mother and a' should gae mad,
Thy Jeanie will venture wi' ye, my lad.

In fact, a fair Dame, at whose shrine I, the Priest of the Nine, offer up the incense of Parnassus—a Dame whom the Graces have attired in witchcraft, and whom the Loves have armed with lightning—a Fair One, *herself the heroine of the song*, insists on the amendment, and dispute her commands if you dare ! †

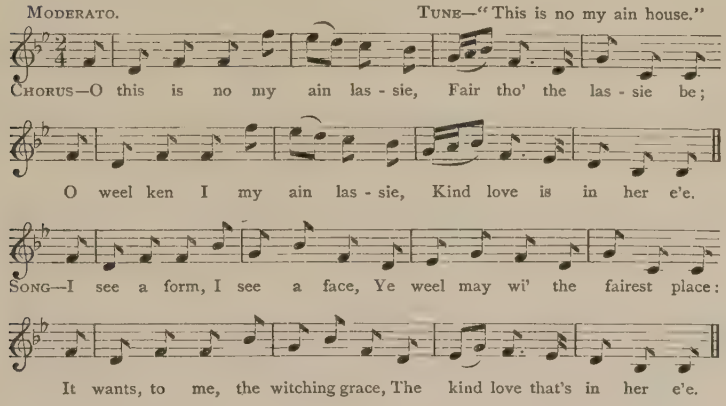
"Gateslack," the word you object to in my last ballad, is positively the name of a particular place, a kind of passage up among the Lawther hills, on the

* Here Burns confirms his former order to cut out the name of the first inspirer of the song—"Nancy," the *Clarinda* of his former devotion—and coolly substitutes that of his presently reigning divinity.

† Dr. Currie's note on this subject is given in connexion with Thomson's reply to the present letter.

confines of this county. "Dalgarnock" is also the name of a romantic spot, near the Nith, where are still a ruined church and a burial place. However, let the line run, "He up the lang loan," &c.

"This is nae my ain Body," alter into "This is no my ain lassie."

SONG.

Moderato.
Tune—"This is no my ain house."
Chorus—O this is no my ain las - sie, Fair tho' the las - sie be;
O weel ken I my ain las - sie, Kind love is in her e'e.
Song—I see a form, I see a face, Ye weel may wi' the fairest place:
It wants, to me, the witching grace, The kind love that's in her e'e.

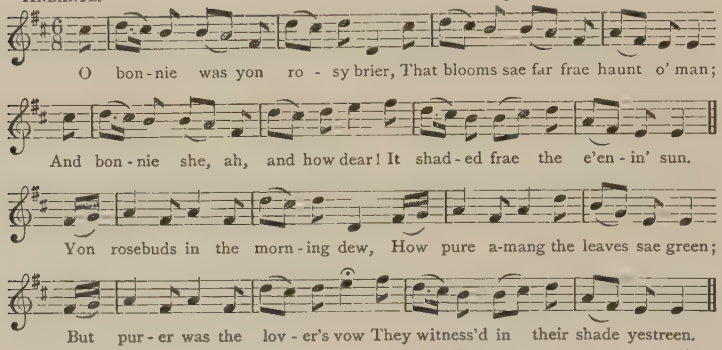
(*See* page 99, Vol. VI.)

Do you know that you have roused the torpidity of Clarke at last? He has requested me to write three or four songs for him, which he is to set to music himself. The enclosed sheet contains two songs for him: the sheet please to present to my very much valued friend whose name is at the bottom of the sheet. I will write him a long letter one of these days. I enclose the sheet, both for your inspection, and that you may copy off the song, "O bonie was yon rosy brier." I do not know whether I am right, but that song pleases me; and as it is extremely probable that Clarke's newly-roused celestial spark will be soon smothered in the fogs of Indolence, if you like the song, it will go as Scottish verses to the air, "I wish my Love was in a mire;" and poor Mr. Erskine's English lines may follow.

I enclose you a "For a' that, and a' that," * which was never in print: it is a much superior song to mine. I have been told that it was composed by a lady:—

SONG.

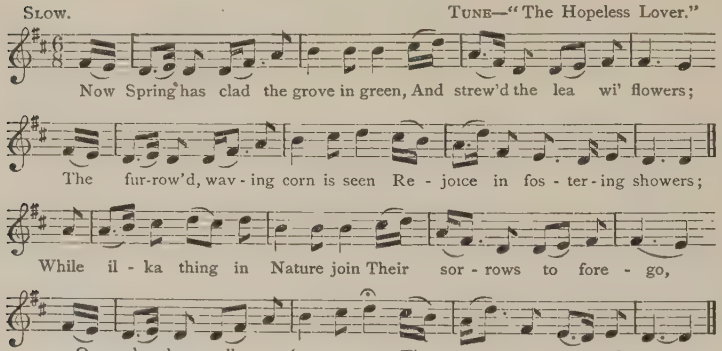
ANDANTE. TUNE—"I wish my Love were in a mire."


O bon-nie was yon ro - sy brier, That blooms sae far frae haunt o' man;
And bon-nie she, ah, and how dear! It shad-ed frae the e'en-in' sun.
Yon rosebuds in the morn-ing dew, How pure a-mang the leaves sae green;
But pur-er was the lov-er's vow They witness'd in their shade yestreen.

(*See* page 100, Vol. VI.)

SCOTCH SONG.

SLOW. TUNE—"The Hopeless Lover."


Now Spring has clad the grove in green, And strew'd the lea wi' flowers;
The fur-row'd, wav-ing corn is seen Re - joice in fos - ter-ing showers;
While il - ka thing in Nature join Their sor - rows to fore - go,
O why thus all a - lone are mine The wea - ry steps of wo?

(*See* page 101, Vol. VI.)

INSCRIPTION TO CHLORIS,

ON A BLANK LEAF OF THE LAST EDITION OF MY POEMS.

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young, fair Friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralising Muse, &c.

(*See* page 105, Vol. VI.)

* The lady's "For a' that," here so much praised, has not been preserved by Thomson in the correspondence. In his reply he speaks slightingly of it.

TO MR. CUNNINGHAM.

Une bagatelle de l'amitié.

—COILA.

(29) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *August 3rd* 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—This will be delivered to you by a Dr. Brianton, who has read your works, and pants for the honor of your acquaintance. I do not know the gentleman; but his friend, who applied to me for this introduction, being an excellent young man, I have no doubt he is worthy of all acceptation.

My eyes have just been gladdened, and my mind feasted, with your last packet—full of pleasant things indeed. What an imagination is yours! it is superfluous to tell you that I am delighted with all the three songs, as well as with your elegant and tender verses to Chloris.

I am sorry you should be induced to alter "O whistle, and I'll come to ye, my lad," to the prosaic line, "Thy Jeanie will venture wi' ye, my lad." I must be permitted to say that I do not think the latter either reads or sings so well as the former. I wish, therefore, you would in my name petition the charming Jeanie, whoever she be, to let the line remain unaltered.*

I should be happy to see Mr. Clarke produce a few airs to be joined to your verses. Everybody regrets his writing so very little, as everybody acknowledges his ability to write well. Pray, was the resolution formed coolly, before dinner, or was it a midnight vow, made over a bowl of punch with the bard?

I shall not fail to give Mr. Cunningham what you have sent him.

P.S.—The lady's "For a' that, and a' that," is sensible enough, but no more to be compared to yours, than I to Hercules. G. T.

* Dr. Currie has the following note here:—"The editor, who has heard the heroine of this song sing it herself in the very spirit of arch simplicity that it requires, thinks Mr. Thomson's petition unreasonable." This is of a piece with the doctor's theory of the heroineship of "Sweet Afton." He means here that he had heard Mrs. Maria Riddell sing the song, and hint that she herself was its heroine—rather an odd confession to proceed from a married lady! Burns's demand made to Thomson to alter the closing line of the chorus, removes all indefiniteness as to the "fair Dame" who forms the subject of the song. He insists on the introduction of the name "Jeanie," to shew that no one but Jean Lorimer can lay claim to be its inspirer.

[The hiatus of seven months which here occurs in the *Thomson Correspondence*, is somehow mysteriously connected with the poet's passion for Jean Lorimer. The reader, by referring to page 167, and tracing the narrative downwards to page 181, of Vol. VI., will see all that is known of the poet's history during that interval.]

(30) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

EDINBURGH, *5th Feb.* 1796.

"O Robby Burns, are ye sleeping yet?
Or are ye wauken, I would wit?"

THE pause you have made, my dear Sir, is awful! Am I never to hear from you again? I know, and I lament how much you have been afflicted of late; but I trust that returning health and spirits will now enable you to resume the pen, and delight us with your musings. I have still about a dozen Scotch and Irish airs that I wish "married to immortal verse." We have several true-born Irishmen on the Scottish list; but they are naturalised, and reckoned our own good subjects. Indeed, we have none better. I believe I before told you, that I have been much urged by some friends to publish a collection of all our favorite airs and songs in octavo, embellished with a number of etchings by our ingenious friend Allan; what is your opinion of this? G. T.

(51) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

February 1796.

MANY thanks, my dear Sir, for your handsome, elegant present to Mrs. B.* and for my remaining volume of P. Pindar. Peter is a delightful fellow, and a first favorite of mine. Now to business. How are you paid by your subscribers here? I gave you in the names of Robert Riddell of Glenriddell, and his brother, Walter Riddell of Woodley Park. Glenriddell subscribed only for the Songs: Walter Riddell for both the Songs and Sonatas. Glenriddell's widow, to whom he left all his fortune, lives now in your

* This was a worsted shawl.

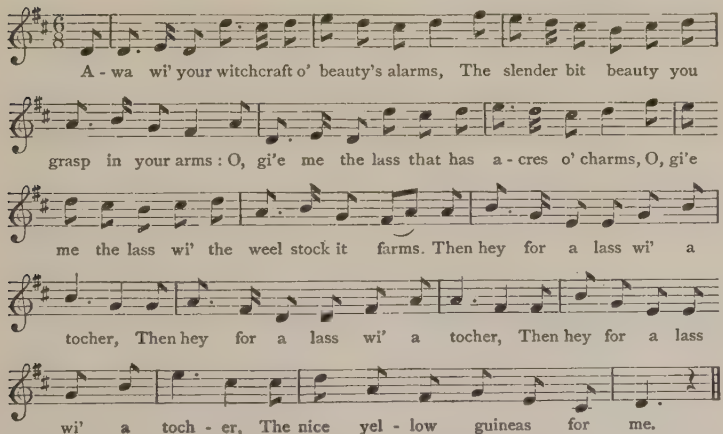
town, and Walter is also at present in it: call on them for their cash. I mention these matters because probably you have a delicacy on my account, as if I had presented them with their copies—a kindness neither of them deserves at my hands. They are bona fide subscribers, and as such treat them. I also supplied another subscriber, Mr. Sharpe of Hoddam, with the second set of Sonatas (my own copy); so charge him accordingly. Mr. Gordon of Kenmure, who subscribed for the Songs only, unknown to me at the time, in a money transaction where I was concerned, paid the 10s. 6d. to my account. So there I am your debitor.

I am much pleased with your idea of publishing a collection of our songs in octavo with etchings. I am extremely willing to lend every assistance in my power. The Irish airs I shall cheerfully undertake the task of finding verses for.

I have already, you know, equipt three with words, and the other day I strung up a kind of rhapsody to another Hibernian melody which I admire much.

HEY FOR A LASS WI' A TOCHER.

TUNE—"Ballinamona Ora."


A - wa wi' your witchcraft o' beauty's alarms, The slender bit beauty you
grasp in your arms: O, gi'e me the lass that has a - cres o' charms, O, gi'e
me the lass wi' the weel stock it farms. Then hey for a lass wi' a
tocher, Then hey for a lass wi' a tocher, Then hey for a lass
wi' a toch - er, The nice yel - low guineas for me.

(*See* page 121, Vol. VI.)

If this will do, you have now four of my Irish engagement — Humors of Glen, Captain O'Kean, Oonagh's Waterfall, and Balinamona. In my by-past songs I dislike one thing—the name Chloris. I meant it as the fictitious name of a certain lady; but, on second thoughts, it is a high incongruity to have a Greek appellation to a Scottish pastoral ballad. Of this and some things else in my next: I have more amendments to propose. What you mentioned, of "flaxen locks," is just: they cannot enter into an elegant description of beauty.* Of this again—God bless you! R. B.

(31) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

[*Feb.* 1796.]

YOUR "Hey for a Lass wi' a Tocher" is a most excellent song, and with you the subject is something new indeed. It is the first time I have seen you debasing the god of self-desire into an amateur of acres and guineas.

I am happy to hear you approve of my proposed octavo edition. Allan has designed and etched about twenty plates for that work. Independently of the Hogarthian humor with which they abound, they exhibit the character and costume of the Scottish peasantry with inimitable felicity. In this respect, he himself says, they will far exceed the aquatinta plates he did for the "Gentle Shepherd," because in the etching he sees clearly what he is doing, but not so with the aquatinta, which he could not manage to his mind. The Dutch boors of Ostade are scarcely more characteristic and natural than the Scottish figures in these etchings. G. T.

* The reader will remember that in August 1795—exactly six months prior to this period—Burns was in the full height of his adoration of this "certain lady." She was then "the peerless Queen of Womankind." There seems to be fair room for conjecture that, in the obscure interval, some blighting influence or damning circumstance must have swayed the poet's estimate of Jean Lorimer.

(52) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*April* 1796.]

Alas! my dear Thomson, I fear it will be some time ere I tune my lyre again! "By Babel streams," &c. Almost ever since I wrote you last, I have only known existence by the pressure of the heavy hand of Sickness, and have counted time by the repercussions of pain! Rheumatism, cold, and fever, have formed, to me, a terrible Trinity in Unity, which makes me close my eyes in misery and open them without hope. I look on the vernal day, and say with poor Fergusson—

> "Say wherefore has an all-indulgent Heaven
> Light to the comfortless and wretched given?"

This will be delivered to you by a Mrs. Hyslop, landlady of the Globe Tavern here, which for these many years has been my Howff, and where our friend Clarke and I have had many a merry squeeze. I mention this, because she will be a very proper hand to bring that seal you talk of. I am highly delighted with Mr. Allan's etchings; "Woo'd and Married an' a'," is admirable! The grouping is beyond all praise. The *expression* of the figures, conformable to the story in the ballad, is absolutely faultless perfection. I next admire "Turnimspyke." What I like least is "Jenny said to Jocky." Besides the female being in her appearance quite a virago, if you take her stooping into the account, she is at least two inches taller than her lover.

I will thank you much for a number or two of that magazine you mention. Poor Cleghorn! I sincerely sympathise with him. Happy I am to think he yet has a well-grounded hope of health and enjoyment in this world. As for me—but this is a damning subject! Farewell! R. B.

([32]) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

4th May 1796.

I NEED not tell you, my good Sir, what concern the receipt of your last gave me, and how much I sympathise in your sufferings. But do not, I beseech you, give yourself up to despondency, nor speak the language of despair. The vigor of your constitution, I trust, will soon set you on your feet again; and then it is to be hoped you will see the wisdom and the necessity of taking due care of a life so valuable to your family, to your friends, and to the world.

Trusting that your next will bring agreeable accounts of your convalescence, and returning good spirits, I remain, with sincere regard, yours, G. T.

P.S.—Mrs. Hyslop, I doubt not, delivered the gold seal to you in good condition.

([53]) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[Date, about 18*th May* 1796.]

MY DEAR SIR, — Inclosed is a certificate, which (though a little different from Mr. M'Knight's model) I suppose will amply answer the purpose, and I beg you will prosecute the miscreants without mercy. When your Publication is finished, I intend publishing a collection, on a cheap plan, of all the songs I have written for you, the *Museum*, &c.,—at least, of all the songs of which I wish to be called the author. I do not propose this so much in the way of emolument, as to do justice to my Muse, lest I should be blamed for trash I never saw, or be defrauded by other claimants of what is justly my own. The post is going, I will write you again to-morrow. Many, many thanks for the beautiful seal. R. B.

The *seal* alluded to in the close of the above letter is the one designed by the poet himself, and commissioned from Edin-

burgh more than two years previously.* It reached him at a period, alas! when few opportunities remained for him to use it. The certificate or mandate of Burns in favor of George Thomson regarding the copyright of the songs, has not been preserved along with the foregoing letter. Its mysterious disappearance as well as the suppression of the letter give a "hole and corner" appearance to this portion of the correspondence, which is far from satisfactory. There was nothing improper in Mr. Thomson honestly applying to Burns, even on his deathbed, to be secured against the songs being used in any rival publication; but it is to be suspected that his design, in this emergency, was to extract something more. What he did ask from the dying poet can only be inferred from the reply; it is clear that he sought to alarm Burns with some news of piracy. The five songs of Burns which Thomson had hitherto published, were "Gala Water," "Auld Rob Morris," "Open the door to me, oh," "Wandering Willie," and "The Sodger's Return." Some of these may have been reprinted in the magazines; and it is probable that "The Sodger's Return" had been set up in broadsheet, and sung through the streets. "I beg you will prosecute the miscreants without mercy," was the poet's excited reply; but he declined to adopt the formal document drafted by Thomson's agent, and preferred to indite his own certificate. Moreover, as if to guard against the idea that the copyright of the songs was absolutely transferred to Thomson, he proceeds to explain, that when that gentleman's musical work shall be completed he intends to publish his songs on his own account.

Nothing however is clearer than the fact, that in dealing with the poet's literary executors, Mr. Thomson obtained credit for allowing the songs and the correspondence to be printed for the benefit of the bard's family. The reader however will observe, from the subjoined list of those songs which Thomson published on his own account before the date of Currie's first edition, that any advantage arising from the first appearance of Burns's songs in print had been almost monopolised by Thomson himself before the surrender referred to. When he published his second half volume in August 1798, he prefaced it with an "Address to the Public," in which he announces his absolute right of property in "about fifty songs by Burns never before published," and appends a copy of the poet's certificate to that effect, in the following terms:—

* See letter to Cunningham (page 397, Vol. IV.), dated March 3, 1794.

"I Do hereby certify and declare, That ALL "the Songs of my writing, published and to be "published by Mr. George Thomson of Edin- "burgh, are so published by my authority. And "moreover, That I never empowered any other "person whatever to publish any of the Songs "written by me for his Work. And I authorise "him to prosecute, in his own name, any person "or persons who shall publish any of those "Songs, without his consent. In testimony "whereof, &c., ROBERT BURNS."

It does not seem a very extraordinary thing that, under the circumstances, our poet should have written and signed the above; and if Mr. Thomson had only seen fit to produce the writer's manuscript, along with the rest of the correspondence, the authenticity of the document could never have been challenged. That Burns did send Mr. Thomson some kind of certificate, or written authority to prosecute offenders against the right of property in the songs, is manifest; but there is unfortunately too much room to doubt the foregoing to be a genuine copy of the poet's document. People who addict themselves to petty manœuvre and stratagem in transacting business with honest and unsuspecting neighbors, are apt to outwit themselves occasionally. Mr. Thomson afterwards, in course of vending his "select melodies and songs," published another version of the poet's mandate in his favor; and the latter one exhibits a few unexpected verbal differences when compared with its predecessor. We shall append them here in parallel columns, so that the reader at a glance may distinguish the alterations. The question will arise:—"Which of these is the genuine one? Are either of them genuine? or, Are they both genuine?"—

First Version.

I Do hereby certify and declare, That ALL the Songs of my writing, published and to be published by Mr. George Thomson of Edinburgh, are so published by my authority. And moreover, That I never empowered any other person whatever to publish any of the Songs written by me for his Work. And I authorise him to prosecute, in his own name, any person or persons who shall publish any of those Songs, without his consent. In testimony whereof, &c.

ROBERT BURNS.

Second Version.

I do hereby certify that all the songs of my writing, published and to be published by Mr. GEORGE THOMSON of Edinburgh, are so published by my Authority. And moreover, that I never empowered any other person to publish any of the songs written by me for his work. And I authorise him to prosecute any person or persons who shall publish or vend ANY of those songs without his consent. In testimony whereof, &c.,

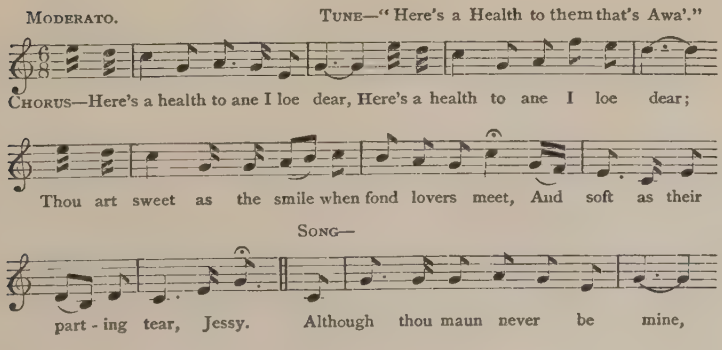
ROBERT BURNS.

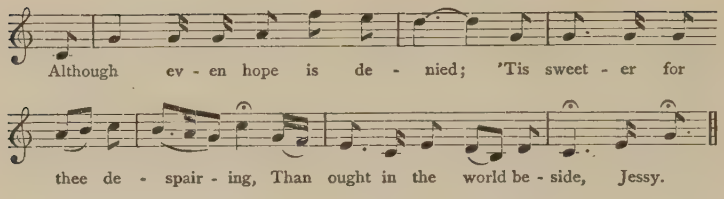
(54) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[*May* 1796.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I once mentioned to you an air which I have long admired—"Here's a health to them that's awa, hiney;" but I forget if you took any notice of it. I have just been trying to suit it with verses; and I beg leave to recommend the air to your attention once more. I have only begun with it:—

SONG.


MODERATO.
TUNE—"Here's a Health to them that's Awa'."
CHORUS—Here's a health to ane I loe dear, Here's a health to ane I loe dear;
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, And soft as their
SONG—
part - ing tear, Jessy. Although thou maun never be mine,



(*See* page 127, Vol. VI.)

This will be delivered by a Mr. Lewars, a young fellow of uncommon merit; indeed, by far the cleverest fellow I have met with in this part of the world. His only fault is D-m-cratic heresy. As he will be a day or two in town, you will have leisure, if you choose, to write me by him; and if you have a spare half-hour to spend with him, I shall place your kindness to my account.

I have no copies of the songs I have sent you, and I have taken a fancy to review them all, and possibly may mend some of them; so when you have complete leisure, I will thank you for either the Originals or copies. I had rather be the author of five well-written songs than of ten otherwise. My verses to "Cauld Kail" I will suppress; and also those to "Laddie, lie near me." They are neither worthy of my name nor of your book.* I have great hopes that the genial influence of the approaching summer will set me to rights, but as yet I cannot boast of returning health. I have now reason to believe that my complaint is a flying gout—a d—nable business!

Do, let me know how Cleghorn† is, and remember me to him.—Yours ever, R. BURNS.

---

* See Vol. VI., pp. 32 and 92. Chloris is the subject of them both.

† We have searched the printed obituaries in vain for the date of Robert Cleghorn's death; but apparently he did not long survive Burns. In August 1796 he subscribed two guineas towards the relief of the poet's family, Mrs. Cleghorn at same time subscribing one guinea. The death of his daughter is noted in the *Scots Magazine* as having occurred in July 1804, and she is there designed as "daughter of the deceased Mr. Robert Cleghorn of Saughton Mills." His widow resided at Kinleith Mills, near Currie, when the daughter died.

[*Turn over.*]

This should have been delivered to you a month ago, but my friend's trunk miscarried, and was not recovered until he came home again. I am still very poorly, but should like much to hear from you.

R. B.

The above letter (like that addressed to James Johnson,—*see* page 194, Vol. VI.) was finally despatched by post on 16th June. Mr. John Lewars, the brother of Jessy, the heroine of the song, was then a bachelor, and five years younger than Burns. He was subsequently appointed a supervisor of excise in Dumfries (a post formerly filled by his late father), and he retired from the service in 1825, and died in 1826.

On 26th June, the poet penned his beautiful inscription to Jessy Lewars in the copy of Johnson's *Museum* then presented to her, and on the morning of Monday 4th July, he removed to sea-bathing quarters at Brow.

(55) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

(CHAMBERS' EDITION, 1852.)

BROW, *4th July* 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,—I received your songs; but my health is so precarious, nay dangerously situated, that, as a last effort, I am here at sea-bathing quarters. Besides my inveterate rheumatism, my appetite is quite gone, and I am so emaciated as to be scarce able to support myself on my own legs. Alas! is this a time for me to woo the Muses? However, I am still anxiously willing to serve your work, and, if possible, shall try. I would not like to see another employed, unless you could lay your hand upon a poet whose productions would be equal to the rest. You will see my remarks and alterations on the margin of each song. My address is still Dumfries. Farewell, and God bless you! R. BURNS.

(56) BURNS TO MR. THOMSON.

[BROW, on the Solway Frith, 12*th July* 1796.]

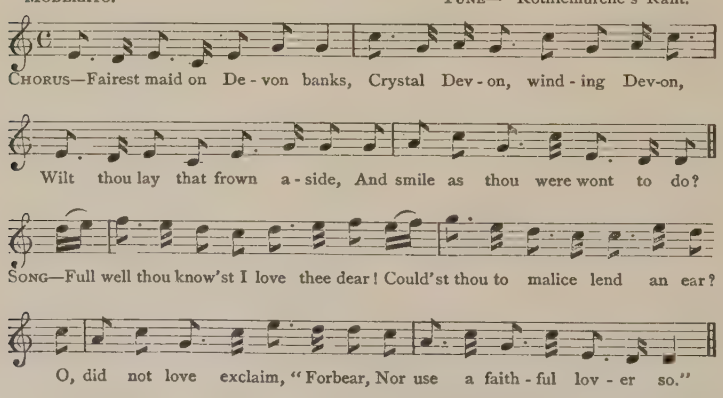
AFTER all my boasted independence, curst Necessity compels me to implore you for five pounds. A cruel scoundrel of a Haberdasher, to whom I owe an account, taking it into his head that I am dying, has commenced a process, and will infallibly put me into jail. Do, for God's sake, send me that sum, and that by return of post. Forgive me this earnestness; but the horrors of a jail have made me half distracted. I do not ask all this gratuitously; for upon returning health, I hereby promise and engage to furnish you with five pounds' worth of the neatest song-genius you have seen. I tried my hand on "Rothiemurchie" this morning. The measure is so difficult, that it is impossible to infuse much genius into the lines: they are on the other side. Forgive, forgive me!

Yours, R. BURNS.

[*Turn.*]

SONG.

MODERATO. TUNE—"Rothiemurche's Rant."


CHORUS—Fairest maid on De - von banks, Crystal Dev - on, wind - ing Dev-on,
Wilt thou lay that frown a - side, And smile as thou were wont to do?
SONG—Full well thou know'st I love thee dear! Could'st thou to malice lend an ear?
O, did not love exclaim, "Forbear, Nor use a faith - ful lov - er so."

(*See* page 132, Vol. VI.)

(33) MR. THOMSON TO BURNS.

[14*th July* 1796.]

My Dear Sir,—Ever since I received your melancholy letters by Mrs. Hyslop [in April], I have been ruminating in what manner I could endeavor to alleviate your sufferings. Again and again I thought of a pecuniary offer, but the recollection of one of your letters on this subject, and the fear of offending your independent spirit, checked my resolution. I thank you heartily, therefore, for the frankness of your letter of the 12th, and with great pleasure enclose a draft for the very sum I proposed sending. Would I were Chancellor of the Exchequer but for one day, for your sake!

Pray, my good Sir, is it not possible for you to muster a volume of poetry? If too much trouble to you in the present state of your health, some literary friend might be found here, who would select and arrange your manuscripts, and take upon him the task of editor. In the meantime, it could be advertised to be published by subscription. Do not shun this mode of obtaining the value of your labor; remember Pope published the *Iliad* by subscription. Think of this, my dear Burns, and do not reckon me intrusive with my advice. You are too well convinced of the respect and friendship I bear you, to impute anything I say to an unworthy motive.

Yours faithfully, G. T.

The verses to "Rothiemurchie" will answer finely. I am happy to see you can still tune your lyre.

Here ends, with the life of Burns, this interesting and valuable correspondence. We have no inclination to join the ranks of those who are very hard in their censures of Mr. Thomson, in respect of his pecuniary dealings with the Bard; for after the proud and determined style of independence in which Mr. Thomson's little donation of 1st July 1793 was received, he had a difficult part to perform. It is a pity he limited his last remittance to "the very sum I proposed sending," in response to the imploring request so affectingly made by his distracted correspondent; but we must defer to the opinion of Lord Cockburn in this matter. On 3rd March 1847, within four years from the day when Thomson expired at the age of 94, a superb silver vase with inscription—the contribu-

tion of one hundred gentlemen of Edinburgh—was presented to him in testimony of their respect and esteem. On that occasion his lordship said:—"As to the imputations on Mr. Thomson in connexion with the history of Burns I have long ago studied the matter with as much candor as any man could apply to a subject in which he had no personal interest, and my clear conviction is, not only that all those imputations are groundless, but that, if Mr. Thomson were now placed in the same situation in which he was then, nothing different or better could be done."

Mr. Thomson, during the period of his connection with the bard, made him two remittances of five pounds each; and sent Burns a copy of Ritson's English Songs, and of Peter Pindar's works. He also bestowed three or four copies of part first of his own publication, and presented to Mrs. Burns a Paisley shawl, and a drawing by David Allan, representing the family worship scene in "The Cotter's Saturday Night." After the poet's death, he gave two guineas to the Edinburgh subscription for the family, and allowed Dr. Currie to publish the songs Burns had written for him, with the relative correspondence, which latter he took the trouble to arrange. We also find that in 1800 he presented volume second of his collection of songs to Gilbert Burns, who acknowledged the gift in these terms: "If ever I come to Edinburgh, I will certainly avail myself of your invitation to call on a person whose handsome conduct to my brother's family has secured my esteem, and confirmed to me the opinion that musical taste and talents have a close connexion with the harmony of the moral feelings."

We shall now conclude this department of our work by giving a few particulars regarding the publication in which Burns took so much interest, and so liberally helped with the effusions of his genius.

The editor's preface to his first half-volume, folio-size, consisting of 25 songs harmonised by Pleyel, is dated "Blair Street, Edinburgh, 1st May 1793." It contains only five songs written by our poet for that publication. These we have already enumerated, and another song "My Nannie, O," previously published, was added to the number.

The second half-volume of Thomson's songs appeared in August 1798 (two years after the poet's death). Besides embracing ten songs borrowed from Johnson's *Museum*, it contained eleven songs written expressly for Thomson, namely,

1. Duncan Gray cam here to woo.
2. Deluded swain, the pleasure.
3. Here is the glen and here the bower.
4. How lang and dreary is the night.
5. Let not woman e'er complain.
6. O mirk, mirk is the midnight hour.
7. O poortith cauld and restless love.
8. O stay, sweet warbling woodlark, stay.
9. O saw ye bonie Leslie.
10. Sweet fa's the eve on Craigieburn.
11. True-hearted was he, the sad swain of the Yarrow.

Volume second of Thomson's work, containing fifty songs with accompaniments by Pleyel and Kozeluch, appeared in July 1799. Besides twelve songs by Burns, borrowed from Johnson's *Museum*, it includes 28 lyrics expressly written for Thomson's publication. Those marked with an asterisk in the following list, had been communicated by the author to Johnson also, in whose publication they appeared in December 1796.

1. Adown winding Nith I did wander.
2. Awa' wi' your witchcraft o' beauty's alarms.
3. Blythe hae I been on yon hill.
4. By Allan stream I chanced to rove.
5. Come let me take thee to my breast.
6. Contented wi' little and canty wi' mair.
7. Farewell thou stream that winding flows.
8. Had I a cave on some wild, distant shore.
9. Here's a health to ane I loe dear.
10. How cruel are the parents.
11. Husband, husband, cease your strife.
12. It was the charming month of May.
13. Last May a braw wooer cam doun the lang glen.*
14. Now in her green mantle blythe Nature arrays.
15. Now rosy May comes in wi' flowers.
16. Now Spring has clad the groves in green.
17. O this is no my ain lassie.

* In Johnson's sixth vol. (1803) appeared a version of this popular song, beginning, "Ae day a braw wooer cam doun the lang glen," and shewing several verbal changes (among these the happy one, "my auld shoon," instead of "her new shoon"). Stenhouse, in his annotations, 1820, averred that Burns had composed the song in 1787 for Johnson who, from religious scruples, forebore to publish it till Dr. Currie printed *the very inferior version* supplied to Thomson in July 1795! Piratical fraud, backed by literary impudence, scarcely ever went beyond this.

18. O wat ye wha that loes me?
19. O wat ye wha's in yon town?*
20. O whistle and I'll come to you, my lad.
21. Scots wha hae (Tune "Lewie Gordon").
22. Should auld acquaintance be forgot?*
23. The groves o' sweet myrtle.
24. The small birds rejoice.
25. Thine am I, my faithful Fair.
26. Thou hast left me ever, Jamie.
27. Wilt thou be my dearie!*
28. Ye banks and braes and streams around.

The reader will observe from the foregoing lists that before the appearance of Currie's first edition for behoof of the widow and family of the poet, Thomson had given to the public, on his own account, forty-four of the songs written for him by Burns.

The preface to Thomson's third volume of his "Select Collection of Scottish Songs" is dated December 1801. It contains fourteen of Burns's lyrics taken from Johnson's *Museum*, while it includes only seven* of those expressly composed for his own publication, namely:—

1. Behold, my love, how green the groves.
2. Fairest maid on Devon banks.
3. Lassie wi' the lint-white locks.
4. Long, long the night.
5. O Logan, sweetly didst thou glide.
6. O bonie was yon rosy brier.
7. Where are the joys I hae met in the morning.

Volume IV. of Thomson's publication appeared in 1805, containing, besides eleven of Burns's songs from other sources, thirteen that had been composed for his own work. One of these however—"Sae flaxen were her ringlets"—had been published in 1796 by Johnson, to whom also the bard had given it.

1. Behold the hour, the boat arrive.
2. Forlorn my love, no comfort near.
3. Hark, the mavis e'ening sang.

---

* In this volume the famous ode, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled," is again introduced, but restored to its first and best form, and set to its own proper tune. Thomson's apologetic note will be found at page 231, *supra*.

4. How can my poor heart be glad?
5. Is there for honest poverty.
6. Mark yonder pomp of costly fashion.
7. O lassie art thou sleepin yet?
8. O Philly, happy be the day.
9. O were my love yon lilac fair.
10. Sae flaxen were her ringlets.
11. Sleep'st thou, or wak'st thou, fairest creature?
12. There was a lass and she was fair.
13. When o'er the hills the eastern star.

Volume V. and last of Thomson's collection appeared in 1818. The only song it contains expressly written for that work by Burns, is headed thus,

"My wife's a winsome wee thing,—by Burns and Thomson."

It contains also "Mary Morison" which was presented to Thomson, although not composed for him.

In 1822, Mr. Thomson published the long-promised octavo edition of his collection of Scottish songs, with the airs and accompaniments; these extended to six volumes, the last of which appeared in May 1825, the price of each volume being 10s. 6d. At that date he advertised that he was re-engraving the music plates of his folio collection, which would be sold at these prices:—

Scottish Songs in five vols. folio, at 21s. each.
Irish Songs, in three vols. folio, at 15s. each.
Welsh Songs, in two vols. folio, at 15s. each.

Some of these bear the date 1831; and during twenty years thereafter, the venerable song-editor continued to vend his books and draw in "the bawbees."

[Our opinion is that Burns was much to be pitied for his unbusiness-like liberality to Thomson; and Thomson is still more to be blamed for his selfish shifts and lack of generosity to the poet's family after the decease of the Bard.—G. G.]

FIRST COMMON-PLACE BOOK.

OBSERVATIONS, HINTS, SONGS, SCRAPS OF POETRY, &c., BY ROBT. BURNESS.

(*Printed verbatim from the original MS.*)

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THIS unique manuscript, extended in a stitched book of twenty-two leaves folio, was purchased by John Adam, Esq., Town Chamberlain, Greenock, in 1861; its previous owner having been J. L. Sangford, Esq., of the Temple. Sundry markings on it shew that it had passed through the hands of Currie, who printed from it the song "Handsome Nell." That editor, however, seems to have thrown it aside; for instead of selecting examples of the poet's first Common-place Book from the original MS., he preferred to give the brief abridgement of it inscribed by Burns in the volume of Letters which he wrote out for Mr. Robert Riddell of Glenriddell. This early manuscript, in a few years thereafter, came into the hands of Cromek, who, in his *Reliques* (1808), professed to print the document entire; yet he not only presented it in a very incomplete form, but confused it by interpolating passages from other manuscripts of Burns; in particular, that very interesting one headed "Egotisms from my own sensations," which never formed a portion of this Common-place Book. Where Cromek obtained those additions, embracing the *Elegy on Robert Ruisseaux*, the song *Rantin, rovin Robin*, and two song-fragments, one of which refers to the poet's anticipated expatriation, does not appear, and the MS. has not yet turned up. Cromek has dove-tailed those "Egotisms" into his version of the early Common-place Book, as of date *May* 1785; but the pieces, from internal evidence, apparently belong to the year following.

The manuscript, of which, by the kindness of the owner, we are now enabled to present to the reader a perfect reproduction, bears every mark of integrity and completeness, and seems to be as fresh as the day when its author put his last touch to it in October 1785. There are sundry judicious notes scattered throughout its pages, bearing the initials "J. S.," which are recognised to be in the hand-writing of John Syme, Esq., of Ryedale. He accompanied Gilbert Burns on his visit to Dr. Currie of Liverpool, to place in that biographer's hands the materials for the Life and Works of the Poet. There appears also a series of earlier notes signed "W. R.," which indicate that Burns in 1786 had submitted the MS. to a Mauchline friend bearing those initials, for his advice as to what pieces might be extracted from it to help his Kilmarnock edition. The annotations of that person are in the highest degree absurd and conceited, and we have little hesitation in assigning them to William Ronald, tobacconist and merchant in Mauchline, who assumed at that time to be one of the poet's patrons. Burns, in a letter to his brother William in November 1789, refers to the "insolent vanity" of Ronald during former sunshiny days, and contrasts that with his present bankruptcy.

To render our print of this Common-place Book complete, we not only introduce the notes referred to, but give the text *verbatim et literatim*, exhibiting even defective spelling and punctuation where these occur. Such minuteness seems requisite and even interesting to the reader, as marking the gradual development of the poet in his course of self-education, and shewing the labors through which he ultimately mastered the niceties of his art. It is proper to add that in 1872 a privately printed copy of this Greenock MS., was executed in Edinburgh, and circulated to a limited extent. It is a creditable performance, but unfortunately the letterpress was set up, not from the manuscript itself, but from a transcript of it by an amanuensis who has failed to produce an exact rendering of the original. Possessors of that printed copy are invited to compare it with what we now present.

"Examined—J. S., 30th Aug. 1797."

Observations, Hints, Songs, Scraps of Poetry &c. by Robt Burness; a man who had little art in making money, and still less in keeping it; but was, however, a man of somé sense, a great deal of honesty, and

unbounded good-will to every creature rational or irrational.—As he was but little indebted to scholastic education, and bred at a plough-tail, his performances must be strongly tinctured with his unpolished, rustic way of life; but as I believe, they are really his own, it may be some entertainment to a curious observer of human-nature to see how a Ploughman thinks, and feels, under the pressure of Love, Ambition, Anxiety, Grief, with the like cares and passions, which, however diversified by the Modes, and Manners of life, operate pretty much alike I believe, in all the Species.

"There are numbers in the world, who do not want sense, to "make a figure; so much as an opinion of their own abilities, to "put them upon recording their observations, and allowing them "the same importance which they do to those which appear in "print."—SHENSTONE

"Pleasing when youth is long expir'd to trace,
"The forms our pencil, or our pen design'd!
"Such was our youthful air and shape and face!
"Such the soft image of our youthful mind"
IBIDEM.*

X April—83. Notwithstanding all that has been said against Love respecting the folly & weakness it leads a young unexperienced mind into; still I think it, in a great measure, deserves the highest encomiums that have been passed upon it. If any thing on earth deserves the name of rapture or transport it is the feelings of green eighteen† in the company of the

* In the original MS. this note occurs here:—
"The following pieces marked thus X appear to J. S. to be agreeable and interesting—not only from their own merit but from the circumstances and time in which they must have been written. The observations &c. made by Burns give them additional value. The maxims and remarks also seem to me to be worthy of being published for the same reason."

† In the MS., by means of deletion and interpolation, the poet's characteristic expression "green eighteen" has been changed by some clumsy critic into the prosaic phrase "a youth at eighteen." The student of Burns will recognise in this brief entry of April 1783 the germ of one of the finest stanzas in "The Cotter's Saturday Night."

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Burns' First Love. Nelly Kilpatrick

mistress of his heart when she repays him with a equal return of affection.

Aug. There is certainly some connection between Love, and Music, & Poetry; and therefore, I have always thought it a fine touch of Nature, that passage in a modern love composition

"As towards her cot he jogged along"
"Her name was frequent in his song"

For my own part I never had the least thought or inclination of turning Poet till I got once heartily in Love, and then Rhyme and Song were in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart. The following composition was the first of my performances, and done at an early period of life, when my heart glowed with honest warm simplicity; unacquainted, and uncorrupted with the ways of a wicked world. The performance is, indeed, very puerile and silly: but I am always pleased with it, as it recals to my mind those happy days when my heart was yet honest and my tongue was sincere. The subject of it was a young girl who really deserved all the praises I have bestowed on her. I not only had this opinion of Her then—but I actually think so still, now that the spell is long since broken, and the inchantment at an end.

X SONG.—(*Tune*—"I am a man unmarried.")

1.

O once I lov'd a bonny lass
Ay and I love her still
And whilst that honor warms my breast
I'll love my handsome Nell
Fal lal de lal &c.

2.

As bonny lasses I hae seen,
And mony full as braw;

But for a modest gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

3.

A bonny lass I will confess
Is pleasant to the e'e;
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.

4.

But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
And what is best of a',
Her reputation is compleat
And fair without a flaw.

5.

She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gate
Gars ony dress look weel.

6.

A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart.

7.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me;
'Tis this inchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without controul.

FINIS.

X Critisism on the Foregoing Song.

Lest my works should be thought below Criticism; or meet with a Critic who, perhaps, will not look on them with so candid and favorable an eye; I am determined to criticise them myself.

The first distic of the first stanza is quite too much in the flimsy strain of our ordinary street ballads; and on the other hand, the second distic is too much in the other extreme. The expression is a little akward, and the sentiment too serious. Stanza the second I am well pleased with; and I think it conveys a fine idea of that amiable part of the Sex—the agreables; or what in our Scotch dialect we call a sweet sonsy Lass. The third Stanza has a little of the flimsy turn in it; and the third line has rather too serious a cast. The fourth Stanza is a very indifferent one; the first line is, indeed all in the strain of the second Stanza, but the rest is mostly an expletive. The thoughts in the fifth Stanza come finely up to my favorite idea a sweet sonsy Lass: the last line however, halts a little. The same sentiments are kept up with equal spirit and tenderness in the sixth Stanza but the second and fourth lines ending with short syllables hurts the whole. The seventh Stanza has several minute faults; but I remember I composed it in a wild enthusiasm of passion, and to this hour I never recollect it, but my heart melts, and my blood sallies at the remembrance.

Sept. I intirely agree with that judicious Philosopher Mr Smith in his excellent Theory of Moral Sentiments, that Remorse is the most painful sentiment that can embitter the human bosom. Any ordinary pitch of fortitude may bear up tolerably well, under those calamities, in the procurement of which, we ourselves have had no hand; but when our own follies or crimes, have made us miserable & wretched, to bear it up with manly firmness, and at the same time have

a proper penitential sense of our misconduct,—is a glorious effort of Self-command.

Of all the numerous ills that hurt our peace;
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish;
Beyond comparison the worst are those
By our own folly, or our guilt brought on.
In ev'ry other circumstance the mind
Has this to say, it was no deed of mine:
But, when to all the evil of misfortune
This sting is added, blame thy foolish self;
Or worser far, the pangs of keen remorse:
The tort'ring, gnawing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involved others;
The young, the innocent, who fondly lov'd us:
Nay more, that very love their cause of ruin—
O! burning Hell, in all thy store of torments
There's not a keener Lash ———
Lives there a man so firm who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down it's agonizing throbs,
And, after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace.
O happy, happy, enviable man!
O glorious magnanimity of soul!

March—84. A penitential thought, in the hour of Remorse, Intended for a tragedy

All devil as I am, a damned wretch;
A hardened, stubborn, unrepenting villain:
Still my heart melts at human wretchedness;
And with sincere, though unavailing sighs
I view the helpless children of distress.
With tears indignant I behold th' Oppressor
Rejoicing in the honest man's destruction
Whose unsubmitting heart was all his crime.
Even you, ye hapless crew, I pity you,

Ye, whom the seeming good think sin to pity;
Ye, poor, despis'd, abandon'd vagabonds
Whom Vice as usual, has turn'd o'er to ruin.
O but for kind, though ill requited friends
I had been driven forth like you forlorn
The most detested, worthless wretch among ye:
O! injur'd God! thy goodness has endow'd me
With talents passing most of my compeers,
Which I in just proportion have abus'd,
As far surpassing other common villains
As Thou in nat'ral parts hast given me more

I have often observed in the course of my experience of human life that every man even the worst, have something good about them, though very often nothing else than a happy temperament of constitution inclining them to this or that virtue; on this likewise, depend a great many, no man can say how many of our vices; for this reason no man can say in what degree any person besides himself can be, with strict justice called wicked.—Let any of the strictest character for regularity of conduct among us, examine impartially how many of his virtues are owing to constitution & education; how many vices he has never been guilty of, not from any care or vigilance, but from want of opportunity, or some accidental circumstance intervening; how many of the weakness's of mankind he has escaped because he was out of the line of such temptation; and, what often, if not always, weighs more than all the rest; how much he is indebted to the world's good opinion, because the world does not know all; I say any man who can thus think, will scan the failings, nay the faults & crimes of mankind around him, with a brother's eye.—*

* The reader will scarcely fail to see that the above paragraph contains an outline of the author's famous poetical "Address to the Unco Gude, or the Rigidly Righteous," published in 1787.

March—84. I have often coveted the acquaintance of that part of mankind commonly known by the ordinary phrase of BLACKGUARDS, sometimes farther than was consistent with the safety of my character; those who by thoughtless prodigality, or headstrong passions have been driven to ruin;—though disgraced by follies, nay sometimes "Stain'd with guilt, and crimson'd o'er with crimes;" I have yet found among them, not a few instances, some of the noblest Virtues, Magnanimity Generosity, disinterested friendship and even Modesty, in the highest perfection.*

March—84. There was a certain period of my life that my spirit was broke by repeated losses & disasters, which threatened, and indeed effected the utter ruin of my fortune. My body, too was attacked by that most dreadful distemper, a Hypochondria, or confirmed Melancholy: in this wretched state, the recollection of which makes me yet shudder, I hung my harp on the Willow trees, except in some lucid intervals, in one of which I composed the following—

X O Thou great Being! what Thou art
Surpassest me to know:
Yet sure I am that known to thee
Are all affairs below.

Thy creature here before thee stands,
All wretched & distrest;
Yet sure those ills that press my soul
Obey thy high behest.

* "My experience of this class has been very much the reverse of that of Burns. I have usually found their virtues of a merely theatrical cast, and their vices real; much assumed generosity in some instances, but a callousness of feeling, and meanness of spirit, lying concealed beneath."—HUGH MILLER, 1854.

(Without controverting Hugh Miller's estimate of the average city "blackguard" of modern times, we can easily appreciate how the Bohemianism of the 18th century could not but have attractions for the Bohemian blood that coursed in the veins of Burns.—J. H.)

Sure Thou all Perfect canst not act
From cruelty, or wrath:
O! free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death.

But if I must afflicted be
To suit some wise design;
O! man my soul with firm resolves
To bear and not repine.

Finis.

X April—As I am, what the men of the world, if they knew of such a man, would call a whimsical Mortal; I have various sources of pleasure & enjoyment which are, in a manner, peculiar to myself; or some here & there such other out-of-the-way person.—Such is the peculiar pleasure I take in the season of Winter, more than the rest of the year.—This, I believe, may be partly owing to my misfortunes giving my mind a melancholy cast; but there is something even in the—

"Mighty tempest & the hoary waste
"Abrupt & deep stretch'd o'er the buried earth—"

which raises the mind to a serious sublimity, favorable to every thing great & noble.—There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more—I don't know if I should call it pleasure, but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me—than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood or high plantation, in a cloudy, winter day, and hear a stormy wind howling among the trees & raving o'er the plain.*—It is my best season for devotion; my mind is rapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to Him who, in the pompous

* A note by Mr. John Syme occurs here in the original MS.: "I have heard the Bard frequently enforce the same remark, viz., that Winter-wild, raving, tempestuous weather charmed him most.—J. S."

language of Scripture, "Walks on the wings of the wind."—In one of these seasons, just after a tract of misfortunes I composed the following

SONG.—(*Tune* "M'Pherson's Farewel.")

1

The wintry West extends his blast
And hail & rain does blaw;
Or the stormy North sends driving forth
The blinding sleet & snaw:
And tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
And bird & beast in covert rest,
And pass the weary day.

2

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"
The joyless winter day;
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May—
The tempest's howl it sooths my soul,
My griefs it seems to join;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
There fate resembles mine.

3.

Thou Power Supreme whose mighty scheme,
These woes of mine fulfil:
Here firm, I rest, they must be best,
Because they are thy will:
Then all I want—(O do Thou grant
This one request of mine;)
Since to enjoy, Thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign.

(Finis.)

April—The following Song is a wild Rhapsody miserably deficient in Versification, but as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over.

SONG.—(*Tune* "The weaver & his shuttle O.")

X I like the following.—J. S.

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border O
And carefully he bred me, in decency & order O
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a farthing O
For without an honest manly heart, no man was worth regarding O

Chorus—Row de dow &c.

Then out into the world my course I did determine. O
Tho' to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was charming. O
My talents they were not the worst; nor yet my education: O
Resolv'd was I, at least to try, to mend my situation. O

In many a way, & vain essay, I courted fortune's favoor; O
Some cause unseen, still stept between, & frustrate each endeavor; O
Some times by foes I was o'erpower'd; sometimes by friends forsaken; O
And when my hope was at the top, I still was worst mistaken, O

Then sore harass'd & tir'd at last, with fortune's vain delusion; O
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams; and came to this conclusion; O

The past was bad, & the future hid ; its good or ill
untryed ; O
But the present hour was in my pow'r & so I would
enjoy it, O

No help, nor hope, nor view had I ; nor person to
befriend me ; O
So I must toil, & sweat & moil, & labor to sustain
me, O
To plough & sow, to reap & mow, my father bred
me early, O
For one, he said, to labor bred, was a match for
fortune fairly, O

Thus all obscure, unknown, & poor, thro' life I'm
doom'd to wander, O
Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting
slumber ; O
No view nor care, but shun whate'er might breed me
pain or sorrow ; O
I live to-day as well's I may, regardless of to-morrow, O

But chearful still, I am as well as a Monarch in a
palace ; O
Tho' fortune's frown still hunts me down with all
her wonted malice : O
I make indeed, my daily bread, but ne'er can make
it farther ; O
But as daily bread is all I need, I do not much
regard her. O

When sometimes by my labor I earn a little money, O
Some unforseen misfortune comes generally upon me ; O
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my good natur'd
folly ; O
But come what will I've sworn it still, I'll ne'er be
melancholy, O

All you who follow wealth & pow'r with unremitting ardor, O
The more in this you look for bliss, you leave your view the farther; O
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore you, O
A chearful honest-hearted clown, I will prefer before you. O*

April—Shenstone observes finely that love-verses writ without any real passion are the most nauseous of all conceits; and I have often thought that no man can be a proper critic of Love composition, except he himself, in one, or more instances, have been a warm votary of this passion. As I have been all along, a miserable dupe to Love, and have been led into a thousand weaknesses & follies by it, for that reason I put the more confidence in my critical skill in distinguishing FOPPERY & CONCEIT, from real PASSION & NATURE.—Whether the following song will stand the test, I will not pretend to say, because it is MY OWN; only I can say it was, at the time, REAL.

SONG.—(*Tune* "As I came in by London O.")

Behind yon hills where Stincher flows
'Mong muirs & mosses many, O
The weary sun the day has clos'd
And I'll awa to Nanie. O

Chorus—And O my bonny Nannie O,
My young, my handsome Nannie O
Tho' I had the world all at my will,
I would give it all for Nanie. O

*In the original MS., this note here occurs (a judicious pen has scored it through):—"I don't think the above will do unless it get a sound harrowing.—W. R."

The westlin win' blaws loud & shill,
The night's baith dark & rainy O;
But I'll get my plaid & out I'll steal
And o'er the hill to Nanie O.

My Nanie's charming, sweet, & young;
Nae artfu' wiles to win ye O:
May ill befa' the flattering tongue
That would beguile my Nanie O.

Her face is fair, her heart is true,
As spotless as she's bonny O;
The op'ning gowan wet wi' dew
Nae purer is than Nanie O.

A country lad is my degree
And few there be that ken me O;
But what care I how few they be,
I'm welcome ay to Nanie O.

My riches a's my pennie fee
And I maun guide it canny O
But warl's gear ne'er troubles me
My thoughts are a' about Nanie O.

Our Guidman delights to view
His sheep & his ky thrive bonny; O
But I'm as blythe that hauds his plew
And haes nae care but Nanie O.

Come weel, come woe, I care na by
I'll tak' what Heaven will sen' me O;
Nae other care in life have I
But live and love my Nanie O.

And O my bonny Nanie O;
My young, my handsome Nanie O

Tho' I had the world all at my will
I would give it all to Nanie O.*

April—Epitaph on Wm. Hood Senr., in Tarbolton.

Here Souter Hood in death does sleep;
To Hell if he's gane thither,
Satan, gie him thy gear to keep;
He'll haud it weel the gither.

On Jas. Grieve, Laird of Boghead, Tarbolton.

Here lies Boghead amang the dead,
In hopes to get salvation;
But if such as he, in Heav'n may be,
Then welcome, hail! damnation.

April—Epitaph on my own friend, & my father's friend, Wm. Muir in Tarbolton Miln.

Here lies a chearful, honest breast,
As e'er God with his image blest.
The friend of Man, the friend of Truth;
The friend of age, & guide of youth.
Few hearts like his with Virtue warm'd
Few heads with knowledge so inform'd,
If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
If there is none, he made the best of this.

April—Epitaph on my ever honored Father

O ye! who sympathise with Virtue's pains!†
Draw near with pious rev'rence & attend;
Here lye the loving HUSBAND'S dear remains,
The tender FATHER, and the generous Friend.

* This note here occurs in the original MS., and is also scored through: "Nanie is an excellent song, indeed capital—but the last stanza is shamefull, must[1] be published.—W. R."

[1] The erudite Mauchline critic evidently omits a *not* or *nat* here.—J. H.

† VAR.—O ye whose hearts deceased merit pains.

The pitying HEART, that felt for human woe,
The dauntless HEART, that fear'd no human pride;
The friend of MAN, to vice alone a foe;
For "even his failings lean'd to VIRTUE'S side." *

(Finis.)

April I think the whole species of young men may be naturally enough divided into two grand Classes, which I shall call the GRAVE, and the MERRY; tho' by the bye these terms do not with propriety enough express my ideas. There are indeed, some exceptions; some part of the species who, according to my ideas of these divisions, come under neither of them; such are those individuals whom Nature turns off her hand, oftentimes, very like BLOCKHEADS, but generally, on a nearer inspection, have something surprisingly clever about them. They are more properly men of Conceit than men of Genius; men whose heads are filled, and whose faculties are engrossed by some whimsical notions in some art, or science; so that they cannot think, nor speak with pleasure, on any other subject.—Besides this pedantic species, Nature has always produced some meer, insipid blockeads, who may be said to live a vegetable life, in this world.†

The GRAVE, I shall cast into the usual division of those who are goaded on; by the love of money; and those whose darling wish, is, to make a figure in the world.—The MERRY, are the men of Pleasure, of all denominations; the jovial lads who have too much fire & spirit to have any settled rule of action; but without much deliberation, follow the strong impulses

* This note is here inserted in the original MS. "Your Father's and Mr. Muir's is worth publishing of the foregoing Epitaphs, but I think you had better suppress the rest.—W. R."

† On this and the next paragraph an anonymous critic inserts the unnecessary remark:—"This is the labor of an inexperienced moralist."

of nature: the thoughtless; the careless; the indolent; and in particular He, who, with a happy sweetness of natural temper, and a cheerful vacancy of thought, steals through life, generally indeed, in poverty & obscurity; but poverty & obscurity are only evils to him, who can sit gravely down, and make a repining comparison between his own situation and that of others; and lastly to grace the quorum, such are, generally, the men whose heads are capable of all the towering of Genius, and whose hearts are warmed with the delicacy of Feeling.

Aug: The foregoing was to have been an elaborate dissertation on the various species of men; but as I cannot please myself in the arrangement of my ideas on the subject, I must wait till farther experience, & nicer observations throw more light on the subject.— In the mean time I shall set down the following fragment which, as it is the genuine language of my heart, will enable any body to determine which of the Classes I belong to.

Green grow the rashes—O
Green grow the rashes—O
The sweetest hour that e'er I spend
Are spent among the lasses—O

There's nought but care on ev'ry hand
In every hour that passes—O
What signifies the life o' man
An' 'twere na for the lasses—O
Green grow &c.

The warly race may riches chase
An' riches still may fly them—O
An' tho at last they catch them fast
There hearts can ne'er enjoy them—O
Green grow &c.

But gie me a canna hour at e'en
My arms about my dearie—O
An' warly cares and warly men
May a' goe tapsalteerie—O
Green grow &c.

For you that's douse an' sneers at this
Ye're nought but senseless asses—O
The wisest man the warl' saw
He dearly lov'd the lasses—O *
Green grow &c.

As the grand end of human life is to cultivate an intercourse with that BEING, to whom we owe life, with ev'ry enjoyment that renders life delightful; and to maintain an integritive conduct towards our fellow creatures; that so by forming PIETY & VIRTUE into habit, we may be fit members for that society of the Pious, and the Good, which reason and revelation teach us to expect beyond the grave—I do not see, that the turn of mind, and pursuits of such a one as the above verses describe—one who spends the hours & thoughts which the vocations of the day can spare with Ossian, Shakespeare, Thomson, Shenstone, Sterne &c. or as the maggot takes him, a gun, a fiddle, or a Song to make, or mend; and at all times some hearts-dear bony lass in view—I say I do not see that the turn of mind & pursuits of such a one are in the least more inimical to the sacred interests of Piety & Virtue, than the, even lawful, bustling, & straining after the world's riches & honors: and I do not see but he may gain Heaven as well, which by the bye, is no mean consideration, who steals thro the Vale of Life, amusing himself with every little flower that

* Here occurs the following note in the original MS.: "This fragment well deserves a place in your collection.—W. R."

fortune throws in his way; as he, who straining strait forward, perhaps spattering all about him, gains some of Life's little eminences, where, after all, he can only see & be seen a little more conspicuously, than, what in the pride of his heart, he is apt to term, the poor, indolent, devil he has left behind him.

Aug: A prayer, when fainting fits, & other alarming symptoms of a Pleurisy or some other dangerous disorder, which indeed still threaten me, first put Nature on the alarm.—

O Thou, Unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope & fear,
In whose dread presence ere an hour
Perhaps I must appear.

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun,
As something loudly in my breast
Remonstrates I have done.

Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me
With passions wild & strong;
And listening to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or FRAILTY stept aside;
Do Thou, All-Good, for such Thou art,
In shades of darkness hide,

Where with INTENTION I have err'd,
No other plea I have
But Thou art good, & goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.*

* Here the following remark is inserted in the MS.—"this Would Look not amiss in my opinion.—W. R."

Aug: Misgivings in the hour of DESPONDENCY and—prospect of DEATH.*

Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene,
  Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between,
  Some gleams of sunshine 'midst renewing storms;
  Is it departing pangs my heart alarms,
Or Death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
  For guilt,—for guilt my terrors are in arms,
I tremble to approach an angry God
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say forgive my foul offence,
  Forgive where I so oft have gone astray;
But should my Author health again dispence
  Again I would desert fair Virtue's way;
  Again to passions I would fall a prey,
Again exalt the brute & sink the man,
  Then how can I for heavenly mercy pray
Who act so counter Heavenly mercy's plan,
Who sin so oft have mourn'd then to temptation ran.

O Thou great Governor of all below!
  If one so black with crimes dare call on Thee;
Thy breath can make the tempest cease to blow,
  And still the tumult of the raging Sea:
  With that controuling Power assist even me
Those headlong, furious passions to confine,
  For all unfit my native powers be
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line:
O aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!†

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* "W. R." inserts a brief note thus, in reference to this poem, "too serious. —W. R."

† This closing stanza had been omitted by the poet, and inserted a little farther on, with a note referring to the omission.

Sept. —— SONG.—(*Tune.* "Invercald's reel—Strathspey.")

Chorus—Tibby I hae seen the day
Ye wadna been sae shy
An' for laik o' gear ye lightly me
But fien' a hair care I

Yestreen I met you on the moor
Ye spak' na but gaed by like stoor
Ye lightly me because I'm poor
But fien' a hair care I.

When comin' hame on Sunday last
Upon the road as I cam' past
Ye snufft an' gae your head a cast
But trouth I caretna by.

I doubt na lass, but ye may think
Because ye hae the name o' clink
That ye can please me at a wink
Whene'er ye like to try

But sorrow tak' him that's sae mean
Altho' his pouch o' coin were clean
That follows ony saucy Quean
That looks sae proud & high

Altho' a lad were e'er sae smart
If that he want the yellow dirt
Ye'll cast your head anither airt
An' answer him fu' dry

But if he hae the name o' gear
Ye'll fasten till him like a breer
Tho' hardly he for sense or lear
Be better than the ky

But Tibby lass tak' my advice
Your father's gear mak's you sae nice
The de'il a ane wad speir your price
Were ye as poor as I

There lives a lass beside yon park
I'd rather hae her in her sark
Than you wi' a' your thousand mark
That gars you look sae high

An' Tibby I hae seen the day
Ye wadna been sae shy
An' for laik o' gear ye lightly me
But fien' a hair care I.*

Sept. —— SONG.—(*Tune* "Black Joke.")

My girl she's airy, she's buxom and gay;
Her breath is as sweet as the blossoms in May;
A touch of her lips it ravishes quite.
She's always good natur'd, good humor'd & free;
She dances, she glances, she smiles upon me
I never am happy when out of her sight.
Her slender neck her handsome waist
Her hair well curl'd her stays well lac'd
Her taper white leg with
For her†
And O for the joys of a long winter night.‡

John Barleycorn—A Song, to its own Tune.

I once heard the old song, that goes by this name, sung; & being very fond of it, & remembering only

* The following note here occurs in the original: "I will not Dispense with this, it is so Excellent. Change the name of Tibbie to some other if it will nat do.—W. R."

† This portion is inserted in hieroglyphics which our printer has no types to represent.

‡ The sapient "W. R." here writes under the original MS.: "This will not do.—W. R.;" and a third hand adds, "No; you are right, W. R."

two or three verses of it viz. the 1st, 2d and 3d, with some scraps which I have interwoven here & there in the following piece.—*

1785
June

1

There was three kings into the east,
Three kings both great & high;
And they have sworn a solemn oath
That John Barleycorn should die.

2.

They've ta'en a plough & plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they have sworn a solemn oath
That John Barleycorn was dead.

3.

But the spring time it came on,
And showers began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again
And sore surpriz'd them all.

4.

The summer it came on,
And he grew thick & strong;
His head well arm'd with pointed spears
That not one should him wrong.

5.

The Autumn it came on,
And he grew wan & pale;
His bending joints & drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

* The reader may notice that the Bard does not complete his sentence here. It is also proper to note that no entries are inserted in the Book betwixt Sept. 1784 and June 1785—a circumstance which tempted Cromek, in his version of this Journal, to introduce some foreign matter here, dated "May," apparently belonging to 1786.

6.

His color sickened more & more,
He faded into age,
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

7.

They took a hook was long & sharp
And cut him down at knee;
They ty'd him fast upon a cart
Like a rogue for forgery.

8.

They laid him down upon his back
And cudgel'd him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm
And turned him o'er & o'er.

9.

They filled up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They've heaved in John Barleycorn
There let him sink or swim.

10.

They've thrown him out upon the floor
To work him farther woe;
And still as signs of life appear'd
They toss'd him to & fro.

11.

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones;
But the Miller us'd him worst of all
For he crush'd him between two stones.

12.

And they have ta'en his very heart's blood
And drank it round & round;
And still the more & more they drank
Their joy did more abound.

13.

John Barleycorn was a Hero bold
Of noble enterprize,
For if you do but taste his blood
'Twill make your courage rise.

14.

'Twill make a man forget his woe,
And heighten all his joy;
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing
Tho the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn
Each man a glass in hand,
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland.*

Finis.

June. { The death & dyin' words o' poor Mailie—my ain pet ewe—an unco mournfu' Tale.

As Mailie & her lambs the gither
Were ae day nibblin' on the tether,
Upon her cloot she coost a hitch
And o'er she warsl'd in the ditch.
There groanin', dyin' she did lye
When Hughoc he cam' doitin' bye.
Wi' glowerin' een & lifted hands

* Here is inserted under the original, the following criticism:—"I dont like the above, but perhaps I am wrong.—W. R."

Poor Hughoc like a statue stands;
He saw her days were near hand ended,
But waes my heart, he couldna mend it;
He gapit wide, but naething spak;
At length poor Mailie silence brak—

O Thou whas lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case,
My dyin' words attentive hear
And bear them to my Master dear:
Tell him if e'er again he keep
As muckle gear as buy a sheep;
O bid him never tye them mair
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair;
But caw them out to park or hill
And let them wander at their will,
So may his flock increase & grow
To scores o' lambs & packs of woo'.

Tell him he was a master kind
And ay was gude to me & mine;
And now my dyin' charge I gi'e him
My helpless lambs I trust them wi' him.
O bid him save their harmless lives
Frae dogs & tods & butchers knives;
But gie them gude het milk their fill
Till they be fit to fen' themsel:
And tent them duely e'en & morn
Wi' tates o' hay & ripps o' corn.
O may they never learn the gaits
Of ither vile unrestfu' pets,
To slink thro slaps, & reave & steal
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail:
So may they like their auld forbears
For mony a year come thro the shears
So wives 'll gie them bits o' bread
And bairns greet for them when they're dead.

My poor toop lamb, my sinn & heir,
O bid him breed him up wi' care;
And if he live to be a beast
To put some havins in his breast.
And warn him ay at ridin' time
To stay content wi' ewes at hame,
And no to rin & wear his cloots
Like ither menseless, graceless brutes;——

And neist my ewie, silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether string.
O may thou ne'er forgather up
Wi' ony blastit moorlan' tipp;
But ay keep mind to moop & mell
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel.
And now my bairns, wi' my last breath
I li'e my blessin' wi' you baith:
And when ye ever mind your mither
Mind to be kind to ane anither.

Now honest Hughoc, dinna fail
To tell my master a' my tale;
And bid him burn this cursed tether,
And for thy pains thou's get my blether.

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head
And clos'd her een amang the dead.*

Finis.

June. A letter sent to John Lapraik, near Muirkirk, a true, genuine, Scotish Bard.

April 1st 1785

While breers & woodbines buding green
And paitricks scraichin' loud at e'en

* Here is inserted the following note:—"Maily must appear.—W. R."

And mornin' poosie whiddin' seen
Inspire my muse
This freedom in an unknown frien'
I pray excuse.

On Fasten-e'en we had a rockin,
To ca' the crack & weave our stockin'
And there was meikle fun & jokin'
Ye need na doubt
At length we had a hearty yokin'
At sang about.

There was ae sang amang the rest
Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife
It touch'd the feelings o' the breast
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought I pleas'd sae weel
The style sae tastie & genteel
Thought I can this be Pope, or Steele,
Or Beatties wark
They tald me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About Muirkirk.

My heart was fidgin' fain to hear't
And sae about him a' I speirt
Then a' that kent him round declar't
He was a devil
But had a frank & friendly heart
Discreet & civil.

That set him to a pint of ale
And either douse or merry tale

Or rhymes & sangs he'd made himsel
Or witty catches
'Tween Inverness & Tiviotdale
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, & swoor an aith
Tho I should pawn my pleugh & graith
Or die a cadger pownie's death
At some dyke back
A pint & gill I'd gie them baith
To hear your crack.

But first & foremost I should tell
Amaist since ever I could spell
I've dealt in makin' rhymes mysel
Tho' rude & rough
But croonin' at a pleugh or flail
Do weel enough

I am na Poet in a sense
But just a Rhymer like by chance
And hae to learnin' nae pretence
Yet what the matter
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance
I jingle at her.

Your Critic folk may cock their nose
And say how can you e'er propose
You wha ken hardly verse by prose
To mak' a sang
But by your leaves my learned foes
Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' the schools
Your latin names for horns & stools

If honest nature made you fools
What sairs your grammars
Ye'd better ta'en up spades & shools
Or knappin' hammers.

A set of silly senseless asses
Confuse their brains in Colledge classes
They gang in stirks & come out asses
Thus sae to speak
And then they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek.

Gi'e me ae spark o' nature's fire
That's a' the learnin' I desire
Then tho I drudge thro dub & mire
At pleugh or cart
My Muse tho hamely in attire
May touch the heart.

O for a spunk o' Allan's glee
Or Ferguson the bauld & slee
Or tight Lapraik my friend to be
If I can hit it
That would be lear enough for me
If I could get it.

Now, Sir, if ye hae frien's enow
Tho real frien's I b'lieve are few
Yet if your catalogue be fou
I'll no insist
But if ye want ae friend that's true
I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel
As ill I like my fauts to tell

But friends & folk that wish me well
They some times roose me
Though I maun own as mony still
As far abuse me.

There's ae wee faut they whiles lay to me.
I like the lasses Gûde forgie me
For mony a plack they wheedle fae me
At dance or fair
May be some ither thing they gie me
They weel can spare.

At Mauchline race or Mauchline fair
I should be proud to meet you there
We'll gie ae night's discharge to care
If we foregather
And hae a swap o' rhyming ware
Wi' ane anither.

The fourgill chap we'll gar him clatter
And kirsen him wi' reekin' water
Syne we'se sit down & take our whitter
To cheer our heart
And faith we'se be acquainted better
Before we part.

Awa ye selfish warldly race
Wha think that havins sense & grace
Even Love & Friendship should give place
To Catch-the-plack
I dinna like to see your face
Nor hear your crack

But ye whom social pleasure charms
Whose hearts true generous friendship warms

Who hold your beings on the terms
'Each aid the Others'
Come to my bowl—come to my arms
My friends my brothers

But to conclude my lang epistle
As my auld pen's worn to the gristle
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fistle
Who am most fervent
While I can either sing or whistle
Your Friend & Servant.

Sic subscribitur ——— ———*

On receiving an answer to the above I wrote the following

April 21st 1785

While new ca't ky rowt at the stake
And pownies reek at pleugh or brake
This hour on e'enin's edge I take
To own I'm debtor
To honest hearted auld LAPRAIK
For his kind letter

Forjesket sair wi' weary legs
Rattlin' the corn out owre the rigs
Or dealin' thro' amang the naigs
Their ten hours bite
My dowie muse sair pleads & begs
I would na write.

The tapietless ramfeezl'd hissie
She's saft at best & something lazy

* Ronald here wisely says :—"The Above is Exceeding pretty.—W. R."

Quo' she ye ken I've been sae bissie
This month & mair
That trouth my head is grown right dissie
And something sair.

Her dowf excuses pat me mad
Conscience says I ye thowless jad'
I'll write and that a hearty blaud
This vera night
Sae dinna ye affront your trade
But rhyme it right

Shall bauld Lapraik the Ace o' hearts
Tho mankind were a pack o' cartes
Roose you sae weel for your deserts
In terms sae friendly
Yet ye'll neglect to shaw your parts
And thank him kindly.*

Sae I got paper in a blink
And in went stumpie in the ink
Says I before I sleep a wink
I vow I'll close it
And if ye winna make it clink
By Jove I'll prose it.

But what my theme's to be, or whether
In rhyme or prose or baith the gither
Or some hotchpotch that's rightly neither
Let time mak' proof
But I shall scribble down some blether
Just clean aff loof.

My worthy friend ne'er grudge & carp
Tho fortune use you hard & sharp

* In the MS. the author had misplaced this verse by making it follow the words "Just clean aff loof," but in a note he points out this as its proper place.

Come kittle up your moorland harp
Wi' gleesome touch
Ne'er mind how Fortune waft & warp
She's but a b——.

She's gien me mony a jirt & fleg
Sin' I could striddle o'er a rig
But by the l—d tho I should beg
Wi' lyart pow
I'll laugh, & sing, & shake my leg
As lang's I dow.

Do ye envy the city Gent
Behint a kist to lie & sklent
Or purse-proud, big wi' cent per cent
And muckle wame
In some bit Burgh to represent
A Bailie's name.

Or is't the lordly feudal Thane
Wi' ruffled sark & glancin' cane
Wha thinks himsel nae sheepshank bane
But lordly stalks
While caps and bonnets aff are ta'en
As by he walks.

May He wha gives us each good gift
Gie me o' wit & sense a lift
Then tho' he turn me out adrift
Thro Scotland wide
Wi' cits & lairds I wad na shift
In a' their pride.

Were this the charter of our state
"On pain of Hell be rich & great"

Damnation then would be our fate
Beyond remead
But thanks to Heaven, that's no the gate
We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran
Since first the HUMAN-RACE began
"The social, friendly, honest man,
Whate'er he be,
'Tis he fulfils Great Nature's plan,
And none but He."

O mandate, glorious & divine!
The followers o' the ragged Nine,
Poor honest devils, yet may shine
In glorious light,
While sordid sons o' MAMON'S line
Are dark as night.

Tho' here, they grunt, & scrape & growl,
Their silly nivefow o' a soul
May in some future carcase howl,
The forest's fright;
Or in a day-detesting owl
May shun the light.

LAPRAIK, & BURNESS then may rise
And reach their native, kindred skies;
And sing their pleasures hopes & joys
In some mild sphere
Still closer knit in Friendship's ties
Each passing year.*

* Here Mr. Ronald adds the following note:—"I think there is some faults in the above which might be easily amended, but the last part of it flags unpardonably,—the first is fraught with genuine humor.—W. R."

August. A SONG—(*Tune*, Peggy Bawn.)

When chill November's surly blast
Made fields & forests bare,
One evening as I wandered forth
Along the banks of Ayr;
I spi'd a man whose aged step
Seem'd weary worn with care
His face was furrow'd o'er with years
And hoary was his hair.

"Young Stranger whither wanderest thou,"
Began the rev'rend Sage;
Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage;
Or hap'ly prest by cares and woes
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth with me to mourn
The miseries of MAN.

Yon sun that hangs o'er Carrick Moors
That spread so far and wide;
Where hundreds labor to support
The lordly Cassilis pride:*
I've seen yon weary winter sun
Twice forty times return.
And every time has added proofs
That man was made to mourn.

O man! while in thy early years
How prodigal of time;
Mispending all those precious hours
Thy glorious youthful prime:

* A note in the MS. by "W. R." remarks as follows:—"*The Lordly Cassilis' pride* is a line you must alter. I was astonished to see anything so personal.—W. R."

Alternate follies take the sway,
  Licentious passions burn,
Which tenfold force give Nature's law
  That, man was made to mourn.

Look not alone on youthful prime,
  Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
  Supported is his right:
But see him "on the edge of days"
  With cares and labors worn,
Then Age and Want—O ill matched Pair!
  Show man was made to mourn.*

A few seem favorites of Fate
  In Fortune's lap carest;
Yet think not all the rich and great
  Are likewise truly blest;
But O what crowds in ev'ry land
  To wants & sorrows born,
Thro weary life this lesson learn
  That man was made to mourn!

Many the ills that Nature's hand
  Has woven with our frame;
More pointed still we make ourselves
  Regret, remorse, & shame:
And Man, whose heaven-erected face
  The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
  Makes countless thousands mourn.

See yonder poor o'erlabor'd wight
  So abject, mean & vile,

* The poet had misplaced this verse in transcribing, but points out in a note that this is its proper position.

Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful tho a weeping wife,
And helpless children mourn.

If I am doom'd yon Lordling's slave,
By Nature's hand design'd,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind;
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn,
Or why has man the will & power
To make his fellow mourn.

Yet let not this too much, my Son,
Disturb thy youthful breast;
This partial view of HUMANKIND
Is surely not the last;
The poor, oppressed, honest heart
Had surely ne'er been born
Had there not been some recompence
To comfort those that mourn.

O Death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest & the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest!
The Great, the Wealthy fear thy blow
From pomps, & pleasures torn;
But oh! a blest relief for those
That, weary-laden, MOURN.

Aug.—However I am pleased with the works of our Scotch Poets, particularly the excellent Ramsay, and

the still more excellent Ferguson, yet I am hurt to see other places of Scotland, their towns, rivers, woods, haughs, &c. immortalized in such celebrated performances, whilst my dear native country, the ancient Bailieries of Carrick, Kyle, & Cunningham, famous both in ancient & modern times for a gallant, and warlike race of inhabitants; a country where civil, & particularly religious Liberty have ever found their first support, & their last asylum; a country, the birthplace of many famous Philosophers, Soldiers, & Statesmen, and the scene of many important events recorded in Scottish History, particularly a great many of the actions of the GLORIOUS WALLACE, the SAVIOUR of his country; yet, we have never had one Scotch Poet of any eminence, to make the fertile banks of Irvine, the romantic woodlands & sequestered scenes on Aire, and the healthy, mountainous source, & winding sweep of Doon emulate Tay, Forth, Ettrick, Tweed, &c. This is a complaint I would gladly remedy, but Alas! I am far unequal to the task, both in native genius & education.

Obscure I am, & obscure I must be, though no young Poet, nor Young Soldier's heart ever beat more fondly for fame than mine.

And if there is no other scene of Being
Where my insatiate wish may have its fill;
This something at my heart that heaves for room,
My best, my dearest part was made in vain.*

Aug: A Fragment. *Tune* I had a horse & I had nae mair.

When first I came to Stewart Kyle
My mind it was nae steady,

* Here a note, in an unknown hand, inserts:—"The above may furnish remark on the Bard."

Where e'er I gaed, where e'er I rade,
A Mistress still I had ay:
But when I came roun' by Mauchlin town,
Not dreadin' any body,
My heart was caught before I thought
And by a MAUCHLINE LADY.

Har'ste.—A Fragment. *Tune* Foregoing

Now breezy win's and slaughtering guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather,
And the muir cock springs on whirring wings
Amang the blooming heather.
Now waving crops, with yellow tops,
Delight the weary Farmer,
An' the Moon shines bright when I rove at night,
To muse on*

Sept.† There is a certain irregularity in the old Scotch Songs, a redundancy of syllables with respect to that exactness of Accent & measure that the English Poetry requires, but which glides in, most melodiously with the respective tunes to which they are set. For instance, the fine old Song of The Mill Mill O, to give it a plain prosaic reading it halts prodigiously out of measure; on the other hand, the Song set to the same tune in Bremner's collection of Scotch Songs which begins "To Fanny fair could I impart &c." it is most exact measure, and yet, let them be both sung before a real Critic, one above the biasses of prejudice, but a thorough Judge of Nature, —how flat & spiritless will the last appear, how trite,

* The two closing words are in cypher, meaning "Jeanie Armour."

† This passage is headed by a note, apparently in Mr. Syme's hand, thus: "The following remarks may be introduced somewhere, when Thomson's letters are noticed."

and lamely methodical, compared with the wild-warbling cadence, the heart-moving melody of the first.—This particularly is the case with all those airs which end with a hypermetrical syllable.—There is a degree of wild irregularity in many of the compositions & Fragments which are daily sung to them by my compeers, the common people—a certain happy arrangement of old Scotch syllables, & yet, very frequently, nothing, not even *like* rhyme, or sameness of jingle at the ends of the lines. This has made me sometimes imagine that perhaps, it might be possible for a Scotch Poet, with a nice, judicious ear, to set compositions to many of our most favorite airs, particularly that class of them mentioned above, independent of rhyme altogether.

There is a noble Sublimity, a heart-melting tenderness in some of these ancient fragments, which show them to be the work of a masterly hand; and it has often given me many a heartake to reflect that such glorious old Bards—Bards, who, very probably, owed all their talents to native genius, yet have described the exploits of Heroes, the pangs of Disappointment, and the meltings of Love with such fine strokes of Nature, and, O mortifying to a Bard's vanity their very names are "buried 'mongst the wreck of things which were."

O ye illustrious Names unknown! who could feel so strongly and describe so well! the last, the meanest of the MUSES TRAIN—one who, though far inferiour to your flights, yet eyes your path, and with trembling wing would sometimes soar after you—a poor, rustic BARD UNKNOWN, pays this sympathetic pang to your memory! Some of you tell us, with all the charms of Verse, that you have been unfortunate in the world—unfortunate in love; he too, has felt all the unfitness of a poetic heart for the struggle of a

busy, bad World; he has felt the loss of his little fortune, the loss of friends, and worse than all, the loss of the Woman he adored! Like you, all his consolation was his Muse—She taught him in rustic measures to complain—Happy, could he have done it with your strength of imagination, and flow of Verse! May the turf rest lightly on your bones! And may you now enjoy that solace and rest which this world rarely gives to the heart tuned to all the feelings of Poesy and love!*

X Sept.—The following fragment is done, something in imitation of the manner of a noble old Scottish Piece called M'Millan's Peggy, and sings to the tune of Galla water.†—My Montgomeries Peggy was my Deity for six, or eight months. She had been bred, tho' as the world says, without any just pretence for it, in a style of life rather elegant.—But as Vanburgh says in one of his comedies, my "dam'd Star Found me out" there too, for though I began the affair, merely in a gaité de cœur, or to tell the truth, what would scarcely be believed, a vanity of showing my parts in Courtship, particularly my abilities at a Billet doux, which I always piqu'd myself upon, made me lay siege to her; and when, as I always do in my foolish gallantries, I had battered myself into a very warm affection for her, she told me, one day in a flag of truce, that her fortress had been for some time before the rightful property of another; but with the greatest friendship and politeness, she offered me every alliance, except actual possession.—I found out afterwards, that what she told me of a preengagement was really true; but it cost some heart Achs to get rid of the affair.—

* Mr. Syme here suggests to Dr. Currie:—"Perhaps the above would take with many readers."

† Mr. Syme here puts in a note:—"This explains the love-letters to Begbie,"—meaning the four letters to "My dear E.," printed by Currie.

I have even tried to imitate in this extempore thing, that irregularity in the rhyme which when judiciously done, has such a fine effect on the ear.

FRAGMENT. *Tune,* GALLA WATER.

Altho' my bed were in yon muir,
Amang the heather, in my plaidie,
Yet happy happy would I be
Had I my dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

When o'er the hill beat surly storms,
And winter nights were dark and rainy;
I'd seek some dell, and in my arms
I'd shelter dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

Were I a Baron proud and high,
And horse and servants waiting ready,
Then a' 'twad gie o' joy to me,
The sharin't with Montgomerie's Peggy.*

Sept.—Another Fragment in imitation of an old Scotch Song, well known among the Country ingle sides—I cannot tell the name, neither of the Song nor the Tune, but they are in fine Unison with one another.—By the way, these old Scottish airs are so nobly sentimental that when one would compose to them; to *south* the tune, as our Scotch phrase is, over & over, is the readiest way to catch the inspiration and raise the Bard into that glorious enthusiasm so strongly characteristic of our old Scotch Poetry.—I shall here set down one verse of the piece mentioned above, both to mark the Song & tune I mean, and likewise as a debt I owe to the Author, as the

* Mr. Syme here notes "Indifferent, & G. B. says it is a parody on an old Scotch Song."

repeating of that verse has lighted up my flame a thousand times.

Alluding to the misfortunes he feelingly laments before this verse

> "When clouds in skies do come together
> To hide the brightness of the sun,
> There will surely be some pleasant weather
> When a' thir storms are past and gone."

Though fickle Fortune has deceiv'd me,
She promis'd fair and perform'd but ill;
Of Mistress, friends, and wealth bereav'd me,
Yet I bear a heart shall support me still.

I'll act with prudence as lang's I'm able
But if success I must never find,
Then come Misfortune, I bid thee welcome,
I'll meet thee with an undaunted mind.

The above was an extempore under the pressure of a heavy train of Misfortunes, which, indeed, threatened to undo me altogether.—It was just at the close of that dreadful period mentioned Page 8th; and though the weather has brightened up a little with me, yet there has always been since, a "tempest brewing round me in the grim sky" of futurity, which I pretty plainly see will, some time or other, perhaps ere long overwhelm me, and drive me into some doleful dell to pine in solitary, squallid wretchedness. However as I hope my poor, country Muse, who, all rustic, akward, and unpolished as she is, has more charms for me than any other of the pleasures of life beside—as I hope she will not then desert me, I may, even then, learn to be, if not happy, at least easy, and south a sang to sooth my misery.

'Twas at the same time I set about composing an air in the old Scotch style.—I am not Musical Scholar

enough to prick down my tune properly, so it can never see the light, and perhaps 'tis no great matter, but the following were the verses I composed to suit it.

O raging Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low ! O
O raging Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low ! O

My stem was fair my bud was green
My blossom sweet did blow ; O
The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,
And made my branches grow ; O

But luckless Fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low.—O
But luckless Fortunes northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low.—O

The tune consisted of three parts, so that the above verses just went through the whole Air.

Oct. 85.—If ever any young man, on the vestibule of the world, chance to throw his eye over these pages, let him pay a warm attention to the following observations ; as I assure him they are the fruit of a poor devil's dear bought Experience.—I have, literaly like that great Poet and great Gallant, and by consequence, that great Fool, Solomon,—"turned my eyes to behold Madness and Folly"—Nay I have, with all the ardor of a lively, fanciful and whimsical imagination, accompanied with a warm, feeling, Poetic heart —shaken hands with their intoxicating friendship.

In the first place, let my Pupil, as he tenders his own peace, keep up a regular, warm intercourse with the Deity, ...

SECOND COMMON-PLACE BOOK.

IMMEDIATELY preceding we have given an entire copy of our bard's earliest Common-place Book, begun in April, 1783, and closed in October, 1785. Near the end of the latter year the poet procured a similar blank-paper version book, containing twenty sheets or eighty folio pages in all; into which he transcribed, in fair hand, fifteen of his principal poetical compositions, namely:—

The Holy Fair,	pages 1 to 6
Hallowe'en,	7 „ 15
Address to the Deil,	16 „ 19
The Auld Farmer's Address to his Mare,	20 „ 22
John Barleycorn, a Ballad,	23 „ 25
Scotch Drink,	26 „ 29
Man was made to Mourn,	29 „ 32
The Twa Dogs: a Tale,	32 „ 39
The Cotter's Saturday at E'en,	40 „ 46
The Author's Earnest Cry and Prayer,	46 „ 51
Address to James Smith,	52 „ 56
Winter, a Dirge,	56 „ 57
Epistle to Davy, a Brother Poet,	57 „ 61
The Death of Poor Mailie,	62 „ 63
Poor Mailie's Elegy,	64 „ 65

The remaining fifteen pages are blank, except that on page 80 are two amended stanzas of the Address to James Smith. There are indications which suggest that the last entries in the book were made shortly after the rupture between the author and the Armour family, about the month of March, 1786. The numerous deletings and alterations in the Address to James Smith and in poor Mailie's Elegy lead to the inference that these pieces were then freshly composed; while the others, from their cleaner penmanship, must have been transcribed from pre-existing manuscripts. The re-modelling of one of the stanzas in the Address to the Deil shows that, in view of sending his poems to the press, he desired to extin-

guish a fine compliment to Jean Armour contained in the original version.

The interesting Collection of autograph poems, we are now referring to, was acquired by George Wilson, Esq., Murrayfield House, Edinburgh, in the latter part of 1876. The document had been placed in Dr. Currie's hands along with the other materials from which he compiled his edition of the Life and Works of Burns, and it remained a family inheritance, during a long series of years, in possession of the biographer's descendants. Eventually, along with the early Common-place Book, which was purchased by the late John Adam, of Greenock, it was sold by auction in London; and after passing through various hands, it is our good fortune now to have the opportunity of describing it before closing the present Work.

The bringing of this manuscript to light settles the date of composition of "The Holy Fair." Following Chambers, Lockhart and others who have expressed their views regarding the chronology of the more important poems that were published in 1786, we had supposed it to be among the latest of the pieces produced in that volume; but it must now be definitely fixed as a composition of August or September, 1785. The only other poem in the list to which the author has attached a date is the "Epistle to Davie," which is recorded as a production of "January 1785." The references to Jean in the four concluding stanzas are so inwoven with the fabric of the composition, that when the poet extracted from *The Vision* and the *Address to the Deil* the beautiful allusions to Jean, he must have found it a hopeless matter to attempt as much with the *Epistle to Davy*.

The MS. in question opens thus:—

"SCOTCH POEMS, BY ROB$^{T.}$ BURNESS.

HOLY FAIR.

Composed in Autumn 1785."

THE motto of eight lines pretended to be quoted from a poem called "Hypocrisy a la mode" is wanting; and it is remarkable that the peculiar mode of spelling the termination of verbs which prevails so much in the author's first edition is rarely countenanced in this MS. Instead of "glintan,"

"chantan," etc., we have *glentin* and *chantin*. When he came to print a second edition he entirely abandoned that approximation to the old Saxon method of terminating the participle present, so common in Dunbar and old Scotch poets, who used "gangand" for *gangin;* "springand" for *springin*, etc. The Edinburgh *literateurs* of 1787 have been blamed by some of our philological critics for poisoning the taste of Burns in such matters; but this manuscript proves that if he was misled at all, it must have been by his Kilmarnock printer, who was old-fashioned enough to print thus :—

> "A Cotter *howkan* in a sheugh
> Wi' dirty stanes *biggan* a dyke."

In verse ix. of "The Holy Fair," instead of the printed lines,

> "There, racer Jess an' twa-three wh-res
> Are blinkin at the entry,"

we have in the manuscript,

> "Bet Barb-r there, an' twa-three wh-res
> Sit blinkin at the entry."

In verse xii., the blanks left for *Moodie's* name are filled up with "Sawnie;" and in verse xiv. the blank in the line referring to Smith of Galston is filled up thus :—"Geordie begins his cauld harangues." In like manner, instead of—"For Peebles, frae the water-fit" in verse xvi., we have—"For fairy Willie Water-fit." At the end of verse xviii., the author inserts a note thus :—"The next verse after the following ought to be in here;" that is to say, he transposes the 19th and 20th stanzas, and the improvement is obvious.

But alas! in describing our MS., we have now to announce that it breaks off in the middle of verse xxix. in the *Holy Fair;* because three leaves of the book (from pp. 5 to 10 inclusive) have been torn out; and by consulting the earliest of the sale catalogues we find the breach is an old one. Thus we want the closing eight and a half verses of "The Holy Fair," and the opening sixteen verses and two lines of verse seventeen of "Halloween." In other respects, the book is quite complete.

So far as we can compare this MS. of "Halloween" with the printed copy, it differs only in one line of the closing verse. Instead of "And unco tales an' funny jokes," we read "And

mony funny tales and jokes." The author's notes occupy two closely written pages at the end of the poem; and these correspond in matter, although not in verbal structure, with the printed version.

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL, *page* 16.

THE motto from Milton is wanting. In verse *third*, instead of the line "An tho' yon lowan heugh's thy hame," we have "An' tho' yon howe het hole's thy hame." In verse *tenth* for "witching skill" we have "wicked (or cantraip) skill." Instead of the present verse *eleventh* we have in the original:—

"Thence knots are coosten, spells contriv'd,
An' the brisk bridegroom newly wived,
Just at the kittle point arriv'd,
Fond, keen, and crouse,
Is by some spitefu' jad depriv'd
O's warklume's use."

This is deleted in the MS., and at the end of the poem the published verse is given with some inconsiderable variation. In verse 12th, for "nighted travellers" we have "nightly travellers." The 15th verse in the original MS. reads thus:—

"Lang syne in Eden's happy scene,
When strappin Edie's days were green,
And Eve was like my bonie Jean,
My dearest part,
A dancin, sweet, young, handsome quean,
Wi' guileless heart."

That verse is deleted in the MS., and the fresh verse extended at the end of the poem. In verse 20th, instead of "A certain Bardie's rantin, drinkin," we read "That Robin rantin, swearin, drinkin."

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS OLD MEERE,

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIPP OF CORN TO HANSEL IN THE NEW-YEAR, *page* 20.

THERE is only a very trifling verbal difference observable on comparing the MS. with the printed copies, till we come to the very close of the poem, where we find,

"Wi' tentie care I'll flit thy tether,
An' clap thy back,
An' mind the days we've haen thegither,
An' ca' the crack."

JOHN BARLEYCORN, a Ballad, *page* 23.

"THERE is an old Scotch song known by that name whose first two verses begin the following; and the general idea of it runs through the whole." Verse 2nd "They've taen a plough," &c.; verse 3rd "The Spring time cam wi' kindly warmth;" verse 4th "The Summer cam wi' sultry heat," &c.; verse 5th "The Autumn cam wi' fresh'ning breeze," &c.

SCOTCH DRINK, *page* 26.

THE MS. corresponds precisely with the printed copy in the author's first edition, the words in italics excepted; and in verse 15, instead of "burnan trash," we have *burnin trash*.

A BALLAD, *page* 29.

"When chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One ev'ning as I wander'd forth,
Along the banks of Aire," &c.

THIS version of "Man was made to mourn," is an improvement on the one we have printed from the First Common-place Book, at page 354, *supra*, and excepting in the title it nearly corresponds with the copy in the author's first edition. Verse 3, however, stands as in the earlier MS.

"Yon sun that hangs o'er Carrick moors,
That spread so far and wide,
Where hundreds labor to support
The lordly Cassilis' pride," &c.

In verse 5, instead of "cares and sorrows," we read *cares and labours;* and in verse 9, for "Nature's law" we have *Nature's hand;* also "will or power," instead of *will and power.*

THE TWA DOGS: A TALE, *page* 32.

THIS corresponds so closely with the copy in the Kilmarnock edition that one might suppose that "wee Johnie" must have printed from it, did we not know that the *printer's copy* thereof is now possessed by the Irvine Burns Club. Our MS. however wants an important couplet which the printed copy puts into the mouth of Luath, near the middle of the poem, where he says of the Cotters that, when under the influence of "twalpennyworth o' nappy,"

> "They lay aside their private cares,
> To mind the Kirk and State affairs;
> They talk o' patronage and priests,
> Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts;
> Or tell what new taxation's comin,
> An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on."

The wanting couplet is the centre one of this quotation, which must have been interpolated by the author in preparing the poem for the press. In our MS. the reading is as follows:—

> "An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy
> Can mak the bodies unco happy;
> They lay aside their private cares
> An' mind the Kirk and State affairs,
> Foretell what new taxation's comin,
> An' wonder at the folk in Lon'on."

We may add that in the MS. the poem is not broken up into so many paragraphs as in the printed copy; and instead of such Kilmarnock terminations as "howkan, biggan, rantan, ramblan, luntan," &c., these verbs are spelled as in the Edinburgh edition. We note also that instead of "thrum guittars," the MS. has "play guittarrs;" and in the closing line, "Resolv'd to meet some ither day," the MS. reads "meet another day."

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY 'T E'EN, *page* 40.

INSCRIBED TO MR. ROBERT AITKEN, AYR.

ON a separate page, apart from the poem, in the manner of a "bastard title," the author has inscribed the motto from Gray's Elegy, headed by the finally adopted title,

"THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT."

The MS. is very perfect, and shows not a single deletion, which is more than can be said of the printer's copy possessed by the Irvine Burns Club. The following are the only variations from the published version that we have observed:—verse 2, for "trains o' craws" we have *flocks o' craws;* verse 3, for "toddlen," we have *toitlen*, a very expressive word; verse 5, we have *and* instead of "or" in the line, "Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;" and in the same verse we have *Maks* instead of "Gars." In verse 8, for "strappan youth," we have *strappin youth;* and for "artless heart" we have *witless heart.* In verse 9, the opening line is "O happy love! where suchen love is found," instead of "where love like this is found;" and in same verse we have "I've pacèd long this weary mortal round," for "I've pacèd much." In verse 10 we read "Virtue, Conscience, Honor, all exil'd," instead of "Honor, Virtue, Conscience."

THE AUTHOR'S EARNEST CRY AND PRAYER TO THE RT. HONBLE. AND HONBLE. THE SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, *page* 46.

THE variations from the Kilmarnock text are very trifling. In verse 2, for "roupet," and "scriechan," we have *roopit*, and *scriechin.* In verse 7, for "greetan, seizan, and crushan't," we have *greetin*, *seizin*, and *crushin't.* The 15th verse is as follows, but deleted by the author, who has written on the margin, "This verse expunge."

"Thee, sodger Hugh, my watchman stented,
If Bardies e'er are represented;
I ken if that your sword were wanted,
Ye'd lend your hand;
But when there's aught to *say* anent it,
Ye're at a stand."

In the 16th verse, instead of the printed words,

"Arouse my boys! exert your mettle
To get auld Scotland back her Kettle,"

we have in the MS.

"Rouse up, my boys! exert your mettle
To get your Mither back her Kittle."

The words "your Mither" are deleted, and "auld Scotland" placed above. The second line of the "Postscript" has "See vines, an' wines, an' olives rise," instead of as in the printed copy.

ADDRESS TO J. SMITH, *page* 52.

"Friendship! mysterious cement of," &c.

VERSE *second* is wanting, but by way of afterthought it is inserted in the last page of the volume, and in the MS. its position is indicated by a marginal note, thus:—"A verse wanting, vide last page of the book."

Verse *third* is absent from the MS. altogether, and a variation occurs at the close of verse *fourth*, where instead of

"Hae ye a leisure moment's time,
To hear what's comin?"

the author had written

"Will ye lay bye a wee whyle's time,
An' hear what's comin?"

Instead of verse *fifth*, as in the printed copy, we have

"Some rhyme because they like to clash,
An' gie a neebor's name a lash,
An' some (vain thought!) for needfu' cash,
An' some for fame;
For me, I string my dogg'rel trash,
For fun at hame."

Not satisfied with this, he inserted the amended stanza in the last page of the book, beside verse second. No variation occurs till in verse *eleventh* we have, instead of the printed version:—

"Then top and main-top, hoist the sail,
All hands aloft,
And large, before Enjoyment's gale,
Let's scud adrift."

Deletions and interpolations are introduced in the author's hand, correcting the stanza.

In verse *fourteenth*, instead of "Dear deluding woman," we read "Dear bewitching woman." In verse *seventeenth*, instead

of "And haply eye the barren hut," the MS. has "And eye the barren, hungry hut." In the following verse "canie" and "cozie" are transposed. Verse 23rd reads thus in the MS.—

"Honor gie to Willie Pitt,
If he goes on to merit it:
Gie wealth," &c.

The proper alteration is made in the author's hand by deletion and interpolation. Instead of "the ramblin squad" in verse 28th, we have "rantin squad."

WINTER, A DIRGE. *Tune*—M'Pherson, *p.* 56.

This is one of the author's juvenile pieces inserted here with a view to publication. A happy amendment in the second half of stanza first is introduced by deletion and interpolation. Instead of, as in the printed copies, "While, tumbling," &c., this MS. has

"Wild, tumbling, brown, the burn runs down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
While bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day."

AN EPISTLE TO DAVY, A BROTHER POET, Jan. 1785, *p.* 57.

Generally speaking this is a beautiful manuscript; and not until we come to stanza vii., is there any deletion. We read

"And even should Misfortunes come,
Yet here I sit that's met wi' some,
An's thankfu' for them yet:"

Not satisfied with this, the author has corrected it thus:—

"I here wha sit has met wi' some."

In stanza ix., the principal variation occurs, thus:

"Fondly dear!
In a' my share of care an' grief,
Which Fate has largely given,
My hope, my comfort an' relief
Are thoughts o' her an' Heaven,
Thou Being, Allseeing," &c.

The above is altered by deletion and interpolation into the text as printed in all editions.

THE DEATH AN' DYING WORDS O' POOR MAILIE,

MY AIN PET YOWE. AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE, *p.* 62.

THE MS. corresponds in all particulars with the printed text of the Kilmarnock edition.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY, *page* 64.

IN verse first, the third line reads, "Poor Robin's fate is at a close," so also is it in line third of the second verse.—"Or gars poor Robin," &c. The third stanza opens thus:—

"Ay whare he gaed she trotted by him."

The fourth stanza, line first, has "yowe" instead of *sheep;* and instead of ending with "Our Bardie," we read "Now Robin, lanely," &c.

Verse fifth is wanting in the body of the poem, but is inserted after the close, with indication where to place it.

Verse sixth, which is as follows, is deleted, and a fresh stanza (as published) is supplied at the end.

"She was nae get o' runted rams
Wi' woo like gait's, an legs like trams;
She was the flow'r o' Fairlie lambs—
A famous breed!
Now Robin, greetin, chows the hams,
O' Mailie dead."

REMARKS ON POPULAR BALLADS.

A.*

Ayrshire Versions of Popular Ballads.

The following letter, and ballad-fragments annexed, were published by Cromek in volume second of his "Select Scottish Songs, ancient and modern"—London 1810. We might have introduced these in chronological order at page 326, Vol. II., immediately before the poet's Highland Tour; but, to avoid interruption in the biographic progress, their insertion was deferred till a convenient position could be found for them as an Appendix. Cromek obtained the MS. from Lord Woodhouselee in January 1809, as appears from a letter now before us (the property of James T. Gibson Craig, Esq.) addressed by Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee) to Cromek, expressing his admiration of "The Reliques of Burns," then recently published.

(2) To William Tytler Esq., of Woodhouselee.

(Cromek, 1810.)

Sir,—Inclosed I have sent you a sample of the old pieces that are still to be found among our peasantry in the West. I had once a great many of such fragments; and some of these *more entire;* but as I had no idea that any body cared for them, I have forgotten them. I invariably hold it sacrilege to add any thing of my own to help out with the shattered wrecks of these venerable old compositions; but they have many various readings. If you have not seen these before, I know they will flatter your true old-style Caledonian feelings; at any rate, I am truly happy to have an opportunity of assuring you how sincerely I am, Revered Sir, your gratefully indebted humble servant, Robert Burns.

Lawnmarket, *Aug.* 1787.†

THE BRAES O' YARROW.

Tune—"Willie's rare."

Nae birdies sang the mirky hour,
Amang the braes of Yarrow,
But slumber'd on the dewy boughs
To wait the waukenin morrow.‡

---

* The remarks on Ballads and Songs are in some manner similar to the notes and anecdotes which Burns promised to make for the Thomson collection. See page 173, *supra*.

† In this, like many other letters of Burns, the year is not given along with the date; and Cromek ventured to insert "1790" in the printed copy—a most palpable error; for the only month of *August* he ever was in Edinburgh was that of 1787.

‡ The beauty of the opening stanza suggests that if the poet reckoned it sacrilege to *add* anything of his own to help out an old fragment, he did not consider it a sin to *prefix* a touch or two for that purpose.

Where shall I gang, my ain true Luve,
Where shall I gang to hide me?
For weel ye ken, i' your father's bower
It wad be death to find me.

O go you to yon tavern house,
An' there count o'er the lawin,
An' if I be a woman true,
I'll meet you in the dawin.

O he's gane to yon tavern house,
An' counted owre his lawin,
An' ay he drank to her gude health,
Was to meet him in the dawin.

But e'er he left yon tavern house,
An' paid the counted lawin,
There started ben three armed men,
To meet him in the dawin.

O wae be unto woman's wit,
It has beguiled many!
She trysted she wad meet me here,
And sent three men to slay me
* * * *
Get up, get up now, sister Ann,
I fear we've wrought you sorrow;
Get up, you'll find your true Luve slain
Adown the banks o' Yarrow.

She sought him east, she sought him west,
She sought him braid and narrow,
Till, in the cliftin o' a craig,
She fand him drown'd in Yarrow.

She's taen three links o' her flowin' hair,
That hung down lang and yellow,
An' she's tied it about sweet Willie's waist,
An' drawn him out o' Yarrow.
* * * *

ROB ROY, THE YOUNGER.*

Tune—A rude set of "The Mill, Mill, O."

Rob Roy from the Highlands came
Unto the Lawlan' border,

* This hero was the son of Rob Roy Macgregor who figured in the Rebellion of 1715. He was outlawed by sentence of the Justiciary Court for non-appearance in his trial for murder of a man named Maclaren in 1736. During his concealment after outlawry he formed the desperate project of carrying off and forcibly accomplishing a marriage with Jane Kaye, heiress of Edenbellie, with a view to obtain her estate. He and his brother, James Macgregor, at the head of a band of armed followers, entered her mother's house, and having seized his intended bride, dragged her out and tied her across a horse, and conveyed her to a wild sequestered place among the mountains of Argyleshire. There, after show of a marriage ceremony, she was forced to bed with the ruffian.

On discovery of her place of concealment she was rescued by her relatives, and Rob Roy, with his brother James, were apprehended and tried for the crime. James escaped from prison before sentence, and was outlawed; while Rob was condemned and executed in February 1753.

To steal away a gay ladye,
To haud his house in order;
He came o'er the Loch o' Lynn,
Twenty men his arms did carry;
Himsel gaed in an' fand her out,
Protesting he would marry.

O will ye gae wi' me, he says,
An' will ye be my honey?
Or will ye be my wedded wife,
For I love you the best of any:
I winna gae wi' you, she says,
Nor will I be your honey;
Nor will I be your wedded wife,
You love me for my money,
* * * *
But he set her on a coal-black steed,
Himsel lap on behind her;
An' he's awa to the Highland hills,
An' defied her friends to find her.

The song went on to narrate the forcing her to bed: and the tune changes to something like "Jenny dang the weaver."

* * * *

Rob Roy was my father ca'd,
Macgregor was his name, ladye;
He led a band o' heroes bold
And I am here the same, ladye:
Be content, be content,
Be content to stay, ladye;
For thou art my wedded wife,
Until thy dying day, ladye.

He was a hedge unto his friends,
A heckle to his foes, ladye;
Every one that durst him wrong
He took him by the nose, ladye.
I'm as bold, I'm as bold,
I'm as bold, and more, ladye;
He that dares my word dispute
Shall feel my good claymore, ladye.

YOUNG HYN' HORN.

To its ain Tune.

Near Edinburgh was a young son born,
Hey lily lee, and a how lo lan;
And his name it was called young *Hyn' horn*,
An' its hey down down deedle airo.

Seven long years he serv'd the King, *Hey lily lee, &c.*
An' its a' for the sake of his daughter Jean,—*An' its hey, &c.*

The King an angry man was he,—*Hey, &c.*
He sent young *Hyn' horn* to the sea,—*An' its, &c.*

But she outwittens o' the King,—*Hey, &c.*
Upon his finger slipt a ring,—*An' its, &c.*

While this, your ring, is bright of hue,—*Hey, &c.*
Then I'm in love with none but you,—*An' its, &c.*

But when the ring grows pale and wan,—*Hey, &c.*
Then I'm in love with another man,—*An' its, &c.*
* * * *

Upon a day he look'd at his ring,—*Hey, &c.*
It was as pale as any thing,—*An' its, &c.*

He has left the sea and come to land,—*Hey, &c.*
And there he met with a beggar man,—*An' its, &c.*

What news, what news, my auld beggar man,—*Hey, &c.*
What news, what news, by sea or lan'?—*An' its, &c.*

Nae news, nae news, the auld beggar said,—*Hey, &c.*
But the King's dochter Jean is going to be wed,—*An' its, &c.*

Cast aff, cast aff thy auld beggar weed,—*Hey, &c.*
And I'll gie thee my gude grey steed,—*An' its, &c.*
* * * *

When he came to the King's castle gate,—*Hey, &c.*
He sought a cup o' wine for young *Hyn' horn's* sake.—*An' its, &c.*

He drank off the wine, and he put in the ring,—*Hey, &c.*
An' now carry that to the King's dochter Jean,—*An' its, &c.*
* * * * * *

O gat ye this by sea, or gat ye this by lan',—*Hey, &c.*
Or gat ye the ring aff a dead man's han'?—*An' its, &c.*

I gat na't by sea, I got na't by lan',—*Hey, &c.*
But I got it frae your ain fair han',—*An' its, &c.*
* * * *

Take off, take off my bridal gown,—*Hey, &c.*
I'll follow this beggar frae town to town,—*An' its, &c.*

Ye need na doff your bridal gown,—*Hey, &c.*
For I'll make you ladye o' mony a town,—*An' its, &c.*
* * * *

APPENDIX B.

Remarks on Scottish Songs and Ballads, inscribed by Burns in an interleaved copy of the first four volumes of Johnson's Musical Museum, belonging to Robert Riddell, Esq. of Glenriddell.

(Cromek, 1808.)

[The following interesting annotations exist in the handwriting of Burns in Captain Riddell's copy of the "Scots Musical Museum;" of which the fourth volume was published in August 1792. After Mr. Riddell's death in April 1794, his widow presented the volumes to her niece, Miss Eliza Bayley of Manchester, to whom Cromek applied for, and obtained, leave to publish our author's notes therein contained.]

Vol. I. Published in May 1787.

Song 1. *The Highland Queen.*

Both music and poetry were composed by a Mr. M'Vicar, purser of the Solway man of war. This I had from Mr. Blacklock.

4. *Bess the Gawkie.*

This song shows that the Scottish Muses did not all leave us when we lost Ramsay and Oswald, as I have good reason to believe that the verses and music are both posterior to the days of these two gentlemen.* It is a beautiful song, and in the genuine Scots taste. We have few pastoral compositions—I mean the pastoral of Nature—that are equal to this.

5. *Lord Gregory.*

It is somewhat singular that, in Lanark, Renfrew, Ayr, Wigton, Kirkcudbright, and Dumfries Shires, there is scarcely an old song or tune which, from the title, &c., can be guessed to belong to, or be the production of, these counties. This I conjecture, is one of these very few; as the ballad, which is a long one, is called, both by tradition and in printed collections, "The Lass o' Lochroyan," which I take to be Lochroyan in Galloway.

6. *The Banks of the Tweed.*

This song is one of the many attempts that English composers have made to imitate the Scottish manner, and which I shall, in these strictures, beg leave to distinguish by the appellation of Anglo-Scottish productions. The music is pretty good, but the verses are just above contempt.

7. *The Beds of Sweet Roses.*

This song, so far as I know, for the first time appears here in print. When I was a boy, it was a very popular song in Ayrshire. I remember to have heard those fanatics, the Buchanites, sing some of their nonsensical rhymes, which they dignify with the name of hymns, to this air.†

8. *Roslin Castle.*

These verses were the production of Richard Hewit, a young man that Dr. Blacklock, to whom I am indebted for the anecdote, kept for some years as an amanuensis. I do not know who is the author of the second song to the tune. Tytler, in his amusing history of Scots music, gives the air to Oswald; but in Oswald's own collection of Scots tunes, where he affixes an asterisk to those he himself composed, he does not make the least claim to the tune.‡

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* Its author was the Rev. Dr. James Muirhead of Logan, minister of Urr, in Galloway, Born 1740, Died 1808. The song first appeared in Herd's collection, first edition, 1769.

† See page 379, Vol. I. Shakespeare, in his Winter's Tale, speaks of "Puritans who sing psalms to hornpipes."

‡ Burns afterwards points out that the tune No. 373, to his own words—"A posie to my ain dear May," is probably the progenitor of this admired melody.

9. *Saw Ye Johnie Comin? Quo She.*

This song, for genuine humor in the verses, and lively originality in the air, is unparalleled. I take it to be very old.*

11. *Saw Ye Nae My Peggie.*

This charming song is much older, and indeed superior to, Ramsay's verses "The Toast," as he calls them. There is another set of the words, much older still, and which I take to be the original one, but though it has a very great deal of merit it is not quite ladies' reading.

The original words, for they can scarcely be called verses, seem to be as follows; a song familiar from the cradle to every Scottish ear.

"Saw ye my Maggie, saw ye my Maggie,
Saw ye my Maggie linkin' o'er the lea?
High kilted was she, high kilted was she,
High kilted was she, the coat aboon her knee.

What mark has your Maggie? what mark has your Maggie?
What mark has your Maggie, that I may ken her by?"—&c., &c.

Though it by no means follows that the silliest verses to an air must, for that reason, be the original song; yet I take this ballad, of which I have quoted part, to be the old verses. The two songs in Ramsay, one of them evidently his own, are never to be met with in the fireside circle of our peasantry; while that which I take to be the old song, is in every shepherd's mouth. Ramsay, I suppose, had thought the old verses unworthy of a place in his collection.

13. *The Flowers of Edinburgh.*

This song is one of the many effusions of Scots Jacobitism. The title, "The Flowers of Edinburgh," has no manner of connexion with the present verses, so I suspect there has been an older set of words, of which the title is all that remains.

By the bye, it is singular enough that the Scottish Muses were all Jacobites. I have paid more attention to every description of Scots songs than perhaps any body living has done, and I do not recollect one single stanza, or even the title of the most trifling Scots air, which has the least panegyrical reference to the families of Nassau or Brunswick; while there are hundreds satirizing them. This may be thought no panegyric on the Scots poets; but I mean it as such. For myself, I would always take it as a compliment

* This very unique song appeared in David Herd's earlier edition, 1769; but a standard collection called "The Charmer," (published in 1751) appears to have first produced it. Boswell, in the Journal of his Tour to the Hebrides, thus refers to that collection:—"14 Oct. 1773—Johnson sometimes amused himself with very slight reading; from which, however, his conversation shewed that he contrived to extract some benefit. At Captain M'Lean's he read a good deal in 'The Charmer,' a collection of Songs."

to have it said that my heart ran before my head*—and surely the gallant though unfortunate house of Stewart, the kings of our fathers for so many heroic ages, is a theme much more interesting than * * *

14. *Jamie Gay.*

This is another and a tolerable Anglo-Scottish piece.

15. *My Dear Jockie.*

Another Anglo-Scottish production.

16. *Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' Strae.*

It is self-evident that the first four lines of this song are part of a song more ancient than Ramsay's beautiful verses which are annexed to them. As music is the language of Nature; and poetry, particularly songs, are less or more localized (if I may be allowed the verb) by some of the modifications of time and place, this is the reason why so many of our Scots airs have outlived their original, and perhaps many subsequent sets of verses; except a single name, or phrase, or sometimes one or two lines, simply to distinguish the tunes by.

To this day, among people who know nothing of Ramsay's verses, the following is the song, and all the song that ever I heard :—

"Gin ye meet a bonie lassie
Gie her a kiss and let her gae;
But gin ye meet a dirty hizzie,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae.
Fye, gae rub her, rub her, rub her,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae:
An' gin ye meet a dirty hizzie,
Fye, gae rub her o'er wi' strae."

---

*Here in 1810 Cromek introduced a note, thus:—"Poor Burns! Thy heart indeed ran always before thy head; but never didst thou fail to carry thy reader's heart along with thee. Instead of kindling at the indignities offered to thy native land, hadst thou been a wise and prudent poet, thou would'st have tuned thy lyre to the praise of some powerful family, and carefully abstained from drawing on thy head the resentment of the guilty Great, or their descendants. Thou might'st have rolled in affluence, and ceased to struggle under the insulting taunts of every little upstart in office. Thou might'st have flourished in thy day, and left behind thee an offspring securely treading the path of honors and preferment, instead of leaving thy wife and children poor and pennyless, at the mercy of the world. Thy mantle, indeed, has been claimed for the first of a new order of poets, who has done all that thou would'st have disdained to do. The world has seen with astonishment, the solid treasures realized by the speculating Muse; but the meretricious laurel will soon wither around the wearer's brow, and succeeding generations will turn with contempt from the cold and the courtly strain." [Scott's "Lay of the last Minstrel" appeared in Jan. 1805; "Marmion" in Feb. 1808; and the "Lady of the Lake" in May 1810. Cromek's reference here is evidently to Walter Scott, as yet untried as a novelist. Cromek did not survive to witness his greater triumphs: he died in March 1812.—DOUGLAS.]

17. *The Lass o' Livingston.*

The old song, in three eight-line stanzas, is well known, and has merit as to wit and humor; but is rather unfit for insertion. It begins:—

"The bonie Lass o' Liviston,
Her name ye ken, her name ye ken,
And she has writt'n in her contract,
To lie her lane, to lie her lane."

18. *The last time I came o'er the Moor.*

Ramsay found the first line of this song, which had been preserved as the title of the charming air, and then composed the rest of the verses to suit that line. This has always a finer effect than composing English words, or words with an idea foreign to the spirit of the old title. Where old titles of songs convey any idea at all, it will generally be found to be quite in the spirit of the air.*

19. *The Happy Marriage.*

Another, but very pretty, Anglo-Scottish piece.

20. *The Lass o' Patie's Mill.*

In Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland, this song is localized (a verb I must use for want of another to express my idea) somewhere in the North of Scotland, and it is likewise claimed by Ayrshire. The following anecdote I had from the present Sir William Cunningham of Robertland, who had it from the last John, Earl of Loudoun. The then Earl of Loudoun—father to the Earl John before mentioned, had Ramsay at Loudoun, and one day walking together by the banks of Irvine water, near Newmills, at a place yet called "Patie's Mill," they were struck with the appearance of a beautiful country girl. His lordship observed that she would be a fine theme for a song. Allan lagged behind in returning to Loudoun Castle, and at dinner produced this identical song.

21 *and* 22. *The Highland Laddie.*

As this was a favorite theme with our later Scottish Muses, there are several airs and songs of that name. That which I take to be the oldest is to be found in this *Museum* (No. 332), beginning "I hae been at Crookie-den." One reason for my thinking so is that Oswald has it in his collection by the name of "The Auld Highland Laddie." It is also known by the name of "Jinglin John," which is a well-known song of four or five stanzas, and seems to be earlier than Jacobite times. As a proof of this, it is little known to the peasantry by the name of "Highland Laddie;" while every body knows "Jinglin Johnie." That song begins:—

"Jinglin John, the meikle man,
He met a lass was blythe and bonie."

* The reader will find an effort of Burns to fit this air, at page 162, Vol. IV.

Another "Highland Laddie" is also in the *Museum*, Vol. V. (No. 467),* which I take to be Ramsay's original, as he has borrowed the chorus, "O my bonie Highland lad," &c. It consists of three stanzas, besides the chorus, and has humor in its composition. It is an excellent, but somewhat licentious song, beginning :—

"As I cam o'er the Cairney Mount,
And down among the blooming heather," &c.

This air, and the common "Highland Laddie" seem to be only different sets.

Another "Highland Laddie," also in the *Museum*, Vol. V. (No. 468), is the tune of several Jacobite fragments. One of these old songs to it only exists, as far as I know, in these four lines :—

"Whare hae ye been a' day,
Bonie laddie, Highland laddie?
Down the back o' Bell's brae,
Courtin Maggie, courtin Maggie."

Another of this name is Dr. Arne's beautiful air (No. 22, Vol. II.) called, the "New Highland Laddie."†

23. *The Turnimspike.*

Tune—"Clout the Caldron."

There is a stanza in this excellent song for local humor, omitted in this set—where I have placed the asterisms (between the ninth and tenth verses).

"They tak the horse then by the head,
And there they make him stand, man;
Me tell them, me hae seen the day
They no had sic command, man."

A tradition is mentioned in *The Bee*, that the second Bishop Chisholm of Dunblane used to say, that if he was going to be hanged, nothing would soothe his mind so much by the way, as to hear "Clout the Caldron" played.

I have met with another tradition that the old song "Have you any pots or pans, or any broken chandlers?" was composed on one of the Kenmure family, in the cavalier times; and alluded to an amour he had, while under hiding, in the disguise of an itinerant tinker. The air is also known by the name of "The Blacksmith and his apron," which, from the rhythm, seems to have been a line of some old song to the tune.

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* Here we have Burns referring to the *fifth* volume of the *Museum*, which was not published till after his death. The explanation is that Johnson had made considerable progress with the music-plates of that volume at the period when these notes were penned (1793), and proof sheets were in the bard's hands.

† The following memorandum is entered in one of the poet's note books :—

THE HIGHLANDER'S PRAYER, AT SHERIFF-MUIR.

"O Lord be Thou with us: but, if Thou be *not* with us, be not against us; but leave it between the red coats and us!"

25. *Auld Lang Syne.*

Ramsay here, as usual with him, has taken the idea of the song, and the first line, from the old fragment, which will appear in the *Museum*, Vol. V.*

27. *Johnie's Grey Breeks.*

To sing such a beautiful air to such execrable verses (as "The Gentle Swain") is downright prostitution of common sense! The Scots verses indeed are tolerable.†

Though this has certainly every evidence of being a Scottish air, yet there is a well-known tune and song in the north of Ireland, called "The Weaver and his shuttle, O," which, though sung much quicker, is every note the very same tune.

28. *He stole my tender heart away.*

This is an Anglo-Scottish production, but by no means a bad one.‡

32. *Fairest of the Fair.*

It is too barefaced to take Dr. Percy's charming song, and by the means of transposing a few English words into Scots, to offer to pass it for a Scots song. I was not acquainted with the Editor until the first volume was nearly finished, else, had I known in time, I would have prevented such an impudent absurdity.

33. *The Blathrie O't.*§

The following is a set of this song, which was the earliest song I remember to have got by heart. When a child, an old woman‖ sung it to me, and I picked up every word at first hearing.

O Willy, weel I mind, I lent you my hand,
To sing you a song which you then did demand;
But my memory's so bad, I had a'maist forgot,
That you called it "the gear an' the blathrie o't."

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* The footnote to No. 21 applies to this also.

† The latter are said to be by John Mayne, author of "Logan Braes," and begin thus:—

Jenny's heart was frank and free
And wooers she had mony; yet
Her sang was ay—Of a' I see,
Commend me to my Johnie yet.
But air or late, he's sic a gate
To mak a body cheerie, that
I wish to be, afore I dee,
His ain kind dearie, yet.

‡ The music is Italian, having been originally composed to Italian words by Signor Thomaso Giordani.

§ "Shame fa' the gear and the blathrie o't," is the turn of an old Scottish song, used when a young handsome girl marries an old man, upon the account of his wealth.—*Kelly's Scots Proverbs.* "The blathrie o't" means "*the silly pleading*, or deplorable influence of it."

‖ This might be Betty Davidson, at Mount Oliphant. See page 352, Vol. I.

I'll sing not of confusion, delusion, or pride,
I'll sing about a laddie was for a virtuous bride;
For virtue is an ornament that time will never rot,
An I preferable to gear an' the blathrie o't.

Tho' my lassie hae nae scarlets nor silks to put on,
We envy not the greatest that sits upon a throne;
I wad rather hae my lassie, tho' she cam in her smock,
Than a princess wi' the gear an' the blathrie o't.

Tho' we hae nae horses nor menyie at command
We will toil on our fit, and we'll work wi' our hand;
And when wearied, then our rest will be sweet in any spot,
And we'll value not the gear and the blathrie o't.

If we hae ony babies, we'll reckon them as lent;
Hae we less, hae we mair, we will ay be content;
For the cottar has mair pleasure in the winnin o' a groat,
Than the miser wi' his gear and the blathrie o't.

We'll fash not the affairs o' the kirk or the queen,
They're nae matters for a sang, let them sink, let them swim;
On your kirk I'll ne'er encroach, but I'll hold it still remote,
Sae take this for "the gear and the blathrie o't."

34. *Dainty Davie.*

This song, tradition says, and the composition itself confirms it, was composed on the Rev. David Williamson's getting the daughter of Lady Cherrytrees with child, while a party of dragoons were searching the house to apprehend him for being an adherent to the solemn league and covenant. The pious woman had put a lady's night-cap on him, and had laid him a-bed with her own daughter, and passed him to the soldiery as a lady, her daughter's bed-fellow. A mutilated stanza or two are to be found in Herd's collection, but the original song consists of five or six stanzas, and were their delicacy equal to their wit and humor, they would merit a place in any collection. The first stanza is—

"Being pursued by the dragoons,
Within my bed he was laid down;
And weel I wat, he was worth his room,
For he was my dainty Davie."

Ramsay's song "Lucky Nancy," though he calls it an old song with additions, seems to be all his own except the chorus—

I was ay telling you,
Lucky Nancy, lucky Nancy,
Auld springs wad ding the new,
But ye would never trow me.

which I should conjecture to be part of a song prior to the affair of Williamson.*

35. *May Eve, or Kate of Aberdeen.*

Kate of Aberdeen is, I believe, the work of poor Cunningham the

* Lord Woodhouselee notified to Cromek that Lord President Forbes composed "Lucky Nancy."

player, of whom the following anecdote, though told before, deserves a recital. A fat dignitary of the Church coming past Cunningham on Sunday as the poor poet was plying a fishing rod in some stream near Durham, his reverence reprimanded Cunningham very severely for such an occupation on such a day. The poor poet, with that inoffensive gentleness of manner which was his peculiar characteristic, replied that he hoped God and his reverence would forgive his seeming profanity of that sacred day, "as he had no dinner to eat but what lay at the bottom of that pool." This, Mr. Woods the player, who knew Cunningham well and esteemed him much, assured me was true.

36. *Tweedside.*

In Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, he tells me that about thirty of the songs in that publication were the works of some young gentleman of his acquaintance; which songs are marked with the letters D. C. &c. Old Mr. Tytler of Woodhouselee, the worthy and able defender of the beauteous Queen of Scots, told me that the songs marked C. in the "Tea-table," were the composition of a Mr. Crawford, of the house of Auchinames, who was afterwards unfortunately drowned coming from France. As Tytler was most intimately acquainted with Allan Ramsay, I think the anecdote may be depended on. Of consequence the beautiful song of "Tweedside" is Mr. Crawford's, and indeed does great honor to his poetical talents. He was a Robert Crawford; the Mary he celebrates was a Mary Stewart, of the Castle-Milk family, afterwards married to a Mr. Ritchie.

I have seen a song, calling itself the "Original Tweedside," and said to have been composed by a Lord Yester. It consisted of two stanzas, of which I recollect the first:—

"When Maggie and I was acquaint,
I carried my noddle fu' high;
Nae lintwhite on a' the green plain,
Nor gowdspink so happy as I:
But I saw her sae fair, and I lo'ed;
I woo'd, but I cam nae great speed;
So now I maun wander abroad,
And my banes far frae the Tweed."

37. *Mary's Dream.*

The Mary here alluded to is generally supposed to be Miss Mary M'Ghie, daughter to the Laird of Airds, in Galloway. The poet was a Mr. (John) Lowe, who likewise wrote another beautiful song, called "Pompey's Ghost."* I have seen a poetic epistle from him in North America, where he now is, or lately was, addressed to a lady in Scotland. By the strain of the verses it appeared that they allude to some love-disappointment.

* This appears to be a mistake on Burns's part. Lowe could not have been the author of "Pompey's Ghost" See page 361, Vol. II.

40. *The Maid that tends the Goats.*

Mr. Dudgeon (the author of this song) is a respectable farmer's son in Berwickshire. (*See* page 290, Vol. II.)

41. *I wish my Love were in a Mire.*

I never heard more of the words of this old song than the title.

43. *Allan Water.*

This Allan Water (which the composer of the music has honored with the name of the air) I have been told is Allan Water, in Strathallan. (*See* page 175, Vol. IV., for Burns's verses to same air.)

44. *There's nae luck about the House.*

This is one of the most beautiful songs in the Scots, or any language. The lines

"And will I see his face again!
And will I hear him speak!"

as well as the two preceding ones,* are unequalled almost by anything I ever heard or read; and the lines

"The present moment is our ain,
The neist we never saw"

are worthy of the first part. It is long posterior to Ramsay's days. About the year 1771, or 72, it came first on the streets as a ballad;

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* These "two preceding lines," so praised by Burns are

"His very tread has music in't
As he comes up the stair:"

the other couplet so commended—"The present moment," &c., forms part of a double stanza, not found in the original ballad, and which is attributed to Dr. Beattie. It is now pretty generally admitted that Mrs. Jean Adam, schoolmistress, a native of Crawfordsdyke, Greenock (born 1710, died 1765), was the authoress of the ballad, which was first printed in David Herd's Collection, first Edition, 1769, under the title of the "Mariner's Wife," where it consists of nine verses of four lines each, with chorus. The following portions of the song, as given in the *Museum*, have been added since its publication by Herd:—

"The cauld blasts o' the winter wind,
That thirled thro' my heart,
They've a' blawn by, I have him safe,
Till death we'll never part;
But what puts parting in my head?
It may be far awa;
The present moment is our ain,
The neist we never saw.

Since Colin's weel, I'm weel content,
I hae nae mair to crave;
Could I but live to mak him blest,
I'm blest aboon the lave;
Then spread the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw;
It's a' for love o' my Goodman,
For he's been lang awa."

and I suppose the composition of the song was not much anterior to that period.

45. *Tarry Woo.*

This is a very pretty song; but I fancy that the first half-stanza, as well as the tune itself, are much older than the rest of the words.

46. *Gramachree.*

This song was composed by Mr. Poe, a counsellor-at-law in Dublin. This anecdote I had from a gentleman who knew the lady—the "Molly"—who is the subject of the song, and to whom Mr. Poe sent the first manuscript of his most beautiful verses. I do not remember any single line that has more true pathos than

"How can she break that honest heart, that wears her in its core!"

but as the song is Irish, it had nothing to do in this collection.

47. *The Collier's Bonie Lassie.*

The first half-stanza is much older than the days of Ramsay. The old words began thus :—

"The collier has a dochter, and O she's wonder-bonie!
A laird he was that sought her, rich baith in lands and money;
She wadna hae a laird, nor wad she be a lady;
But she wad hae a collier, the colour o' her daddie."

49. *My ain kind Deary, O.*

The old words of this song are omitted here, though much more beautiful than those inserted, which were mostly composed by poor Fergusson, in one of his merry humors.* The old words began thus :—

"I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
My ain kind deary, O,
I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
My ain kind deary, O.
Altho' the night were ne'er sae wat,
And I were ne'er sae weary, O,
I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig,
My ain kind deary, O."

51. *Blink o'er the burn, sweet Bettie.*

The old words, all that I remember, are—

"Blink over the burn, sweet Betty,
'Tis a cauld winter night;
It rains, it hails, it thunders,
The moon she gi'es nae light;
It's for the sake o' sweet Betty,
That e'er I tint my way;
Sweet, let me lie beyond thee,
Until the break o' day.

"O Betty will bake my bread,
And Betty will brew my ale,
And Betty will be my love,
When I come over the dale:

* For Burns's own verses to this air, see page 122, Vol. IV.

Blink over the burn, sweet Betty,
Blink over the burn to me,
And while I hae life, dear lassie,
My ain sweet Betty thou'se be."*

58. *The Blythsome Bridal.*

Tune—"An the Kirk wad let me be."

I find the "Blythsome Bridal" in James Watson's collection of Scots poems, printed at Edinburgh in 1716. This collection, the publisher says, "is the first of its nature which has been published in our own native Scots dialect." It is now extremely scarce.

Tradition, in the western parts of Scotland, tells us that the old song, "An the Kirk wad let me be" (of which there are still two stanzas extant), once saved a covenanting clergyman out of a scrape. It was a little prior to the Revolution—a period when being a Scots Covenanter was being a felon—that one of the clergy who was at that time hunted by the merciless soldiery, fell in, by accident, with a party of the military. The soldiers were not exactly acquainted with the person of the reverend gentleman of whom they were in search; but from some suspicious circumstances they fancied that they had got one of that cloth and opprobrious persuasion among them, in the person of this stranger. *Mass John*, to extricate himself, assumed a freedom of manners very unlike the gloomy strictness of his sect; and, among other convivial exhibitions, sung (and some traditions say *composed* on the spur of the occasion) "Kirk wad let me be" with such effect, that the soldiers swore he was a d———d honest fellow, and that it was impossible he could belong to those hellish conventicles; and so gave him his liberty.

The first stanza of this song, a little altered, is a favorite kind of dramatic interlude acted at country weddings, in the south-west parts of the kingdom. A young fellow is dressed up like an old beggar; a peruke, commonly made of carded tow, represents the hoary locks; an old bonnet; a ragged plaid, or surtout, bound with a straw-rope for a girdle; a pair of old shoes, with straw-ropes twisted round the ancles, as is done by shepherds in snowy weather; his face they disguise as like wretched old age as they can: in this plight he is brought into the wedding-house, frequently to the astonishment of strangers who are not in the secret, and begins to sing—

"I am a silly old man,
My name is Auld Glenae," &c.†

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* One of the lines of this song is quoted in *King Lear*, Act iii., Scene 6. Edgar, in his pretended ravings, while the storm is howling around the head of the frantic old king, cries out:—The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale—Come o'er the burn, Bessie, to me." The "pelting of the pitiless storm" would naturally suggest this song to Edgar—"It rains, it hails, it thunders," &c.

† Glenae on the small river Ae, in Annandale; the seat and designation of an ancient branch, and the present representative, of the gallant but unfortunate Dalyells of Carnwath.—*R. B.*

He is asked to drink, and by and by to dance, which, after some uncouth excuses, he is prevailed on to do, the fiddler playing the tune (which here is commonly called "Auld Glenae"); in short, he is all the time so plied with liquor that he is understood to get intoxicated, and with all the ridiculous gesticulations of an old drunken beggar, he dances and staggers until he falls on the floor; yet still in all his riot, nay, in his rolling and tumbling on the floor, with one or other drunken motion of his body, he beats time to the music, till at last, he is supposed to be carried out *dead drunk*.

59. *Sae merry as we twa hae been.*

This song is beautiful. The chorus in particular is truly pathetic. I never could learn anything of its author.

"Sae merry as we twa hae been,
Sae merry as we twa hae been;
My heart it is like for to break
When I think on the days we hae seen."

67. *John Hay's Bonie Lassie.*

She was the daughter of John Hay, Earl, or Marquis of Tweeddale, and late Countess-dowager of Roxburgh. She died at Broomlands, near Kelso, sometime between the years of 1720 and 1740.

68. *The Bonie Brucket Lassie.*

The idea of this song is to me very original; the first two lines are all of it that is old. The rest of the song, as well as those songs in the *Museum* marked T, are the works of an obscure, tippling, but extraordinary body of the name of Tytler, commonly known by the name of "Balloon Tytler," from his having projected a balloon; [a mortal, who, though he drudges about Edinburgh as a common printer, with leaky shoes, a sky-lighted hat, and knee-buckles as unlike as George-by-the-grace-of-God, and Solomon-the-son-of-David; yet that same unknown, drunken mortal is author and compiler of three-fourths of Elliot's pompous Encyclopedia Britannica, which he composed at half a guinea a week.] *

73. *Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow.*

Mr. Robertson, in his statistical account of the parish of Selkirk, says that Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow, was descended from the Dryhope, and married into the Harden family. Her daughter was married to a predecessor of the present Sir Francis Elliot of Stobbs, and of the late Lord Heathfield.

There is a circumstance in their contract of marriage that merits attention, as it strongly marks the predatory spirit of the times. The father-in-law agrees to keep his daughter for some time after the

* It is very curious to note that the portion of these remarks which we enclose within brackets is a verbatim copy of part of a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated 13th November 1788, published for the first time in Douglas' edition, 1876.

marriage; for which the son-in-law binds himself to give him the profits of the first Michaelmas moon!

74. *Down the Burn, Davie.*

I have been informed that the tune of "Down the burn, Davie," was the composition of David Maigh, keeper of the blood slough hounds belonging to the Laird of Riddell, in Tweeddale.

75. *The Banks of the Forth.*

The air is Oswald's.

80. *The Bush aboon Traquair.*

This is another beautiful song of Mr. Crawford's composition. In the neighborhood of Traquair, tradition still shows the "Old Bush," which, when I saw it in the year 1787, was composed of eight or nine ragged birches. The Earl of Traquair has planted a clump of trees near by, which he calls the "New Bush."

82. *My Deary, if thou Die.*

Another beautiful song of Crawford's.

83. *She rose and let me in.*

The old set of this song, which is still to be found in printed collections, is much prettier than this; but somebody (I believe it was Ramsay) took it into his head to clear it of some seeming indelicacies, and made it at once more chaste and more dull.*

85. *Go to the Ewe-bughts, Marion.*

I am not sure if this old and charming air be of the South, as is commonly said, or of the North of Scotland. There is a song, apparently as ancient as "Ewe-bughts, Marion," which sings to the same tune, and is evidently of the North. It begins thus:—

"The Lord o' Gordon had three dochters,
Mary, Marget, and Jean,
They wad na stay at bonie Castle Gordon,
But awa to Aberdeen."

86. *Lewis Gordon.*

This air is a proof how one of our Scots tunes comes to be composed out of another. I have one of the earliest copies of the song, and it has prefixed—"Tune of Tarry Woo;" of which tune a different

* The above note shows how far prejudice will carry even a reasonable mind like that of Burns. Stenhouse informs us that the old indelicate, although certainly poetical, song, by Francis Semple of Beltrees, was "retouched by a masterly hand, who thus presented us with a song at once chaste and elegant, in which all the energetic force and beauty of the original are preserved, without a single idea to crimson the cheek of modesty, or to cause one pang to the innocent and feeling heart." In fact the song still remains in the "Tea-table Miscellany," the "Orpheus Caledonius," and in Herd's collection, in its primitive state of indelicacy. We first find this improved edition of "She rose and let me in" in a collection called "The Blackbird," 1764, edited by "William Hunter, Philo-Architectonicæ."

set has insensibly varied into a different air. To a Scots critic, the pathos of the line :—

"Tho' his back be at the wa',"

must be very striking. It needs not a Jacobite prejudice to be affected with this song. The supposed author of the song was a Mr. Geddes, priest at Shenval, in the Ainzie.*

87. *The Waukin' o' the Fauld.*

There are two stanzas still sung to this tune which I take to be the original song, whence Ramsay composed his beautiful song of that name in the Gentle Shepherd. It begins

"O will ye speak at our town,
As ye come frae the fauld."

I regret that, as in many of our old songs, the delicacy of the old fragment is not equal to its wit and humor.

89. *Oh ono Chrio.*

Dr. Blacklock informed me that this song was composed on the infamous massacre of Glencoe.

91. *I'll never Leave Thee.*

This is another of Crawford's songs, but I do not think in his happiest manner. What an absurdity to join such names as Adonis and Mary together!

93. *Corn Rigs are Bonie.*

All the old words that ever I could meet to this air were the following, which seem to have been an old chorus.

O corn rigs and rye rigs,
O corn rigs are bonie;
And whene'er you meet a bonie lass,
Preen up her cockernony.

96. *The Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre.*

The chorus of this song is old; the rest is the work of "Balloon Tytler."

97. *Bide ye Yet.*

There is a beautiful song to this tune beginning "Alas! my son, you little know," which is the composition of a Miss Jenny Graham, of Dumfries.†

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102. *Tranent Muir.*

Composed by a Mr. Skirving, a very worthy, respectable farmer, near Haddington. I have heard the anecdote often that Lieutenant Smith, whom he satirises in the ninth stanza, came to Haddington

* For some account of "Priest Geddes," see page 253, Vol. III.
† It appeared in Herd's first edition, 1769.

after the publication of the song, and sent a challenge to Skirving to meet him there, and answer for the unworthy manner in which he had noticed him in the song.—"Gang awa back," said the honest farmer, "and tell Mr. Smith that I hae nae leisure to come to Haddington; but tell him to come here, and I'll tak a leuk o' him; and if I think I'm fit to fecht him, I'll fecht him; and if no, I'll do as he did—I'll rin awa!"

103. *To the Weaver's gin ye go.**

The chorus of this song is old, the rest of it is mine. Here once for all, let me apologise for many silly compositions of mine in this work. Many beautiful airs wanted words; in the hurry of other avocations, if I could string a parcel of rhymes together anything near tolerable, I was fain to let them pass. He must be an excellent poet indeed, whose every performance is excellent.

104. *Strephon and Lydia.*

The following account of this song I had from Dr. Blacklock:—The "Strephon and Lydia" mentioned in the song were perhaps the loveliest couple of their time. The gentleman was commonly known by the name of "Beau Gibson." The lady was the "Gentle Jean" celebrated somewhere in Mr. Hamilton of Bangour's poems. Having frequently met in public places, they had formed a reciprocal attachment, which their friends thought dangerous, as their resources were by no means adequate to their tastes and habits of life. To elude the bad consequences of such a connexion, Strephon was sent abroad with a commission, and perished in Admiral Vernon's expedition to Carthagena.

The author of the song was William Wallace, Esq., of Cairnhill, in Ayrshire.

107. *I'm o'er Young to Marry yet.*

The chorus of this song is old. The rest of it—such as it is—is mine. (*See* page 147, Vol. II.)

109. *Love is the cause of my Mourning.*

The words of "The Shepherd's Complaint" are by a Mr. R. Scott, from the town or neighborhood of Biggar.

111. *My Jo, Janet.*

Johnson, the publisher, with a foolish delicacy, refused to insert the last stanza of this humorous ballad, which Ramsay printed entire in the Tea-table Miscellany:—

"My spinnin wheel is auld and stiff,
The rock o't winna stand, sir;
To keep the temper-pin in tiff,
Requires right aft my hand, sir;

* See page 148, Vol. II., for Burns's words.

Mak the maist o't that ye can,
Janet, Janet,
But like it never wale a man,
My Jo, Janet!"

113. *The Birks of Aberfeldy.*

I composed these stanzas, standing under the falls of Aberfeldy, at or near Moness. (*See* page 109, Vol. II.)

114. *M'Pherson's Farewell.*

M'Pherson, a daring robber, in the beginning of this century, was condemned to be hanged at the assizes of Inverness.* He is said, when under sentence of death, to have composed this tune, which he called his own Lament, or Farewell. Gow has published a variation of this fine tune as his own composition, which he calls "The Princess Augusta."

117. *The Highland Lassie, O.*

This was a composition of mine in very early life, before I was known at all in the world. My "Highland Lassie" was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, we met by appointment, on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the Banks of Ayr, where we spent the day in taking farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for our projected change of life At the close of Autumn following she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days, before I could even hear of her illness.†

120. *Fife and a' the lands about it.*

This song is Dr. Blacklock's. He, as well as I, often gave Johnson verses, trifling enough perhaps; but they served as a vehicle to the music.

121. *Were na my heart light, I would die.*

Lord Hailes, in his notes to his collection of Scots poems, says that this song was the composition of a Lady Grisell Baillie, daughter of the first Earl of Marchmont, and wife of George Baillie of Jerviswood.‡

125. *The Young Man's Dream.*

This song is a composition of "Balloon Tytler."

132. *Strathallan's Lament.*

This air is the composition of one of the worthiest and best-hearted

* Error for "Banff," see page 149, Vol. II.

† Highland Mary episode, see Vol. II., page 176.

‡ This lady was born in 1665, and died in 1746. A fine memoir of her was published by her daughter, Lady Murray of Stanhope.

men living, Allan Masterton, Schoolmaster in Edinburgh. As he and I were both sprouts of Jacobitism, we agreed to dedicate the words and air to that cause. But to tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my Jacobitism was merely by way of *vive la bagatelle.*

133. *What will I do gin my Hoggie die?*

Dr. Walker, who was Minister in Moffat in 1772, and is now (1791) Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, told the following anecdote concerning this air. He said that some gentlemen, riding a few years ago through Liddesdale, stopped at a hamlet consisting of a few houses, called Mosspaul (in Ewesdale); when they were struck with this tune, which an old woman, spinning on a rock at her door, was singing. All she could tell concerning it was, that she was taught it when a child, and it was called "What will I do gin my Hoggie die?" No person, except a few females at Mosspaul, knew this fine old tune; which in all probability would have been lost, had not one of the gentlemen, who happened to have a flute with him, taken it down. (*See* page 153, Vol. II.)

140. *Up in the Morning Early.*

The chorus of this is old; the two stanzas are mine. (*See* page 157, Vol. II.)

141. *The Tears of Scotland.*

Dr. Blacklock told me that Smollett, who was at bottom a great Jacobite, composed these beautiful and pathetic verses on the infamous depredations of the Duke of Cumberland after the battle of Culloden.

146. *I dreamed I lay where Flowers were Springing.*

These two stanzas I composed when I was seventeen; they are among the oldest of my printed pieces. (*See* page 7, Vol. I.)

151. *Ah! the poor Shepherd's mournful fate.*

The old tune "Sour Plums o' Gallashiels," probably was the beginning of a song to this air which is now lost.

The tune of Gallashiels was composed about the beginning of the present century by the Laird of Gallashiels's piper.

157. *The Banks of the Devon.*

These verses were composed on a charming girl, a Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now married to James M'Kitrick Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend Gavin Hamilton, of Mauchline, and was born on the banks of Ayr, but was, at the time I wrote these lines, residing at Harvieston, in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon. I first heard the air from a lady in Inverness, and got the notes taken down for the work. (*See* page 129, Vol. II.)

158. *Waly! Waly!*

In the west country I have heard a different edition of the second stanza. Instead of the four lines beginning with "When cockle shells," &c.,* the other way ran thus :—

"O wherefore need I busk my head?
Or wherefore need I kame my hair?
Sin' my fause Luve has me forsook,
And says he'll never loe me mair."

160. *Duncan Gray.*

Dr. Blacklock informed me that he had often heard the tradition that this air was composed by a carman in Glasgow.

161. *Dumbarton Drums.*

This is the last of the West Highland Airs; and from it, over the whole tract of country to the confines of Tweedside, there is hardly a tune or song that one can say has taken its origin from any place or transaction in that part of Scotland. The oldest Ayrshire reel is "Stewarton Lasses," which was made by the father of the present Sir Walter Montgomery Cunningham, *alias* Lord Lysle, since which period there has indeed been local music in that country in great plenty. "Johnie Faa" is the only old song which I could ever trace as belonging to the extensive district of Ayrshire.

162. *Cauld Kail in Aberdeen.*

This song is by the present Duke of Gordon. The old verses are:—

"There's cauld kail in Aberdeen,
And castocks in Strathbogie;
When ilka lad maun hae his lass,
Then fye, gie me my coggie.

Chorus.—My coggie, sirs, my coggie, sirs,
I canna want my coggie;
I wadna gie my three-girr'd caup
For e'er a quean in Bogie.

There's Johnie Smith has got a wife
That scrimps him o' his coggie;
If she were mine, upon my life,
I'd douk her in a bogie.
My coggie, sirs," &c.

163. *For lack of gold.*

The country girls in Ayrshire, instead of the line "She me forsook for a great Duke," say "For Athole's Duke she me forsook," which I take to be the original reading.†

* The wretched four lines introduced in the second stanza thus complained of by Burns, are not found in any of the old editions. In the Tea-table Miscellany, Vol. II., 1726, the words are as quoted above by Burns. So also in the "Charmer," 1751, and David Herd's collection, 1769.

† This song is in "The Charmer," 1751.

These words were composed by the late Dr. Austin, physician in Edinburgh. He had courted a lady, to whom he was shortly to be married; but the Duke of Athole having seen her, became so much in love with her, that he made proposals of marriage, which were accepted of, and she "jilted the Doctor."

166. *Here's a Health to my true love.*

This song is Dr. Blacklock's. He told me that tradition gives the air to our James IV. of Scotland.

170. *Hey tutti taitie.*

I have met the tradition universally over Scotland, and particularly about Stirling, in the neighborhood of the scene, that this air was Robert Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn.

173. *Raving winds around her blowing.*

I composed these verses on Miss Isabella Macleod of Rasa, alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the late Earl of Loudoun, who shot himself out of sheer heart-break at some mortifications he suffered owing to the deranged state of his finances. (*See* page 155, Vol. II.)

174. *Ye Gods, was Strephon's Picture blest?*

Tune—"Fourteenth of October."

The title of this air shows that it alludes to the famous King Crispan, the patron of the honorable Corporation of Shoemakers. St. Crispan's day falls on the fourteenth of October, old style, as the old proverb tells.

"On the fourteenth of October
Was ne'er a sutor sober."*

176. *Since robbed of all that charm'd my view.*

Tune—"Miss Hamilton's Delight."

The old name of this air is "The blossom o' the Raspberry." The song is Dr. Blacklock's.

178. *Young Damon.*

The air is by Oswald.

179. *Musing on the roaring Ocean.*

I composed these verses out of compliment to a Mrs. M'Lachlan, whose husband is an Officer in the East Indies. (*See* p. 162, Vol. II.)

180. *Blythe was she.*

I composed these verses while I stayed at Ochtertyre with Sir William Murray. The lady, who was also at Ochtertyre at the same time, was a well-known toast, Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, who was

* On the other hand, Ritson contends that the air is in honor of King James VII., whose birthday was on 14th October.

called, and very justly, "The Flower of Strathmore." (*See* page 126, Vol. II.)

181. *Johnie Faa, the Gipsey Laddie.*

The people in Ayrshire begin this song—"The Gypsies cam to Lord Cassilis' yett." They have a great many more stanzas in this song than I ever saw in any printed copy. The castle is still remaining at Maybole, where his Lordship shut up his wayward spouse, and kept her for life in confinement.

182. *To Daunton me.*

The two following old stanzas to this tune have some merit:—

"To daunton me, to daunton me,
O ken ye what it is that'll daunton me?
There's eighty-eight and eighty-nine,
And a' that I hae born sinsyne;
There's cess and press and Presbytrie,
I think it will do meikle for to daunton me.

But to wanton me, to wanton me,
O ken ye what it is that wad wanton me?
To see gude corn upon the rigs,
And banishment among the Whigs,
And right restored where right sud be,
I think it wad do meikle for to wanton me."

183. *Polwarth on the Green.*

The author is Captain John Drummond M'Grigor, of the family of Bochaldie.

184. *Absence, a song in the manner of Shenstone.*

The song and air are both by Dr. Blacklock.

185. *I had a horse and I had nae mair.*

This story is founded on fact. A John Hunter, ancestor to a very respectable farming family who live in a place in the parish (I think) of Galston, called Barr-mill, was the luckless hero that "had a horse and had nae mair." For some little youthful follies he found it necessary to make a retreat to the West Highlands, where he "feed himself to a *Highland* laird," for that is the expression of all the oral editions of the song I ever heard. The present Mr. Hunter, who told me the anecdote, is the great grandchild to our hero.*

188. *Up and waur them a', Willie.*

This edition of the song I got from *Tam Neil*, of facetious fame in Edinburgh. The proper expression is "Up and warn a', Willie," alluding to the Crantara, or warning of a Highland Clan to arms. Not understanding this, the Lowlanders in the west, and south, say "Up and *waur* them a', Willie."†

* We first find this clever song, under the title of "The Surprise," in Herd's collection, first edition, 1769.

† The "Gaelic parson" has certainly misled the poet in this matter. "Up an' *waur* them a'" is the common-sense and characteristic phrase which fits the intention of the song.

189. *A Rosebud by my early walk.*

This song I composed on Miss Jenny Cruikshank, only child to my worthy friend, Mr. Wm. Cruikshank, of the High School, Edinburgh. The air is by David Sillar, *quondam* Merchant, and now schoolmaster in Irvine. He is the "Davie" to whom I address my printed poetical epistle in the measure of "The Cherry and the Slae." (*See* page 127, Vol. II.)

191. *Hooly and Fairly.*

It is remark-worthy that the song of "Hooly and Fairly" in all the old editions of it, is called "The Drucken Wife o' Galloway," which localizes it to that country-side.*

194. *Rattlin, roarin Willie.*

The last stanza of this song is mine; it was composed out of compliment to one of the worthiest fellows in the world, William Dunbar, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh, and Colonel of the Chrochallan corps, a club of wits who took that title at the time of raising the fencible regiments. (*See* page 64, Vol. II.)

195. *Where, braving angry Winter's storms.*

This I composed on one of the most accomplished of women, Miss Peggy Chalmers that was, now Mrs. Lewis Hay, of Forbes and Co's Bank, Edinburgh. (*See* page 131, Vol. II.)

196. *Tibbie, I hae seen the day.*

This song I composed about the age of seventeen. (*See* p. 4, Vol. I.)

197. *Nancy's Ghost.*

This song is by Dr. Blacklock.

199. *Cromlet's Lilt.*

The following interesting account of this plaintive Dirge was communicated to Mr. Riddell by Alexander Fraser Tytler, Esq., of Woodhouselee:†—"In the latter end of the 16th century, the eldest son of Chisholm of Cromleck (an estate now possessed by the Drummonds) was much attached to a daughter of Stirling of Ardoch, commonly called Fair Helen of Ardoch. At that period most of our young men of family sought a fortune, or a grave, in France. Cromlus, when he went abroad, was induced to leave the management of his correspondence with his mistress to a lay brother of the monastery of Dunblane, in that neighborhood. This man, unfortunately, became himself deeply attached to Helen, and by keeping up letters

* We find this song, under the title mentioned by Burns, in several old collections, the first of these being "The Charmer," 1751. Its first line should be "Down in yon meadow a couple did tarry."

† That gentleman, in a letter to Cromek, dated 22d January 1809, disclaimed all knowledge of this romantic story; so the likelihood is that it came from his father, the venerable William Tytler of Woodhouselee.

and messages entrusted to him, and by telling her stories to the disadvantage of Cromlus, he managed to irritate both of the lovers, and all connexion was broken off betwixt them.

"Helen was inconsolable, and Cromlus retired to a Hermitage where he composed the 'Lilt' which is identified with his name; and when the artful monk thought time had sufficiently softened Helen's sorrow, he proposed himself as a lover. Helen was obdurate; but at length, overcome by her brother's persuasions, she submitted, rather than consented to the marriage, but there her compliance ended. When forcibly put to bed, she started from it quite frantic, and screaming out that she heard three taps on the wainscot at the bed-head, with these words in the voice of Cromlus—'Helen, Helen, mind me!' Soon thereafter Cromlus arrived at home, and discovered the treachery of the confident—the fraudulent marriage was disannulled, and Helen became Lady Cromleck.

"*N. B.*—Helen's brother, above referred to, was the father of 31 children, his wife Margaret Murray, being a daughter of Murray of Struan, one of the 17 sons of Tullybardine, and whose youngest son, commonly called the 'Tutor of Ardoch,' died in 1715, aged 111 years."

MUSEUM, Vol. III. published 2d February, 1790.

201. *The Marquis of Huntly's Reel.*

The song was composed by the Rev. John Skinner, nonjurer Clergyman at Linshart, near Peterhead. He is likewise the author of "Tullochgorum," "Ewie wi' the crooked horn," "John o' Badenyond," &c., and what is of still more consequence, he is one of the worthiest of mankind. He is also the author of an ecclesiastical history of Scotland. The air is by Mr. Marshall, butler to the Duke of Gordon, the first composer of Strathspeys in the age. I have been told by somebody who had it of Marshall himself, that he took the idea of his three most celebrated pieces—"Marquis of Huntly's Reel," his "Farewell," and "Miss Admiral Gordon's Reel,"—from the old air, "The German Lairdie." *

203. *Gil Morrice.*

"This plaintive ballad ought to have been called 'Child Maurice,' and not 'Gil Morrice.' In its present dress, it has gained immortal honor from Mr. Home's taking from it the ground-work of his fine tragedy of 'Douglas.' But I am of opinion that the present ballad is a modern composition; perhaps not much above the age of the middle of last century; at least I should be glad to see or hear of a copy of the present words prior to 1650. That it was taken from an old ballad, called 'Child Maurice,' now lost, I am inclined to believe;

* Any reader who is acquainted with this latter tune, as well as Marshall's fine compositions, will smile at the poet's simplicity in giving credence to so unlikely a parentage.

but the present one may be classed with 'Hardycanute' (first printed in 1719), 'Kenneth,' 'Duncan,' the 'Laird of Woodhouselee,' 'Lord Livingston,' 'Binnorie,' 'The Death of Monteith,' and several other modern productions, which have been swallowed by many readers, as ancient fragments of old poems.

"This beautiful, plaintive tune was composed by Mr. M'Gibbon, the selector of a collection of Scots tunes."—*Robt. Riddell.*

In addition to the observations on "Gil Morrice," I add, that of the ballads which Captain Riddell mentions, "Kenneth" and "Duncan" are juvenile compositions of Mr. M'Kenzie, the "Man of Feeling." Mr. M'Kenzie's father shewed them in MSS. to Dr. Blacklock, as the productions of his son, from which the Doctor rightly prognosticated that the young poet would make, in his more advanced years, a respectable figure in the world of letters. This I had from Blacklock.

R. B.

205. *When I upon thy Bosom lean.*

This song was the work of a very worthy, facetious old fellow, John Lapraik, of Dalfram, near Muirkirk; which little property he was obliged to sell in consequence of some connexion as security for some persons concerned in that villanous bubble, *The Ayr Bank.* He has often told me that he composed this song one day when his wife had been fretting over their misfortunes. (*See* page 110, Vol. I.)

207. *Tibbie Dunbar.*

This tune is said to be the composition of John M'Gill, fiddler in Girvan. He called it after his own name.

209. *My Harry was a Gallant gay.*

The oldest title I ever heard to this air was "The Highland Watch's Farewell to Ireland." The chorus I picked up from an old woman in Dumblane; the rest of the song is mine. (*See* page 104, Vol. III.)

210. *The Highland Character.*

This tune was the composition of General Reid, and called by him "The Highland, or 42d Regiment's March." The words ("In the garb of old Gaul") are by Sir Harry Erskine.

211. *Leaderhaughs and Yarrow.*

There is, in several collections, the old song of this name. It seems to have been the work of one of our itinerant minstrels, as he calls himself, at the conclusion of his song "Minstrel Burn."

212. *The Tailor fell thro' the bed, thimble an' a'.*

This air is the march of the Corporation of Tailors. The second and fourth stanzas are mine.

215. *Beware o' Bonie Anne.*

I composed this song out of compliment to Miss Ann Masterton, the daughter of my friend, Allan Masterton, the author of the air

"Strathallan's Lament," and two or three others in this work. (*See* page 51, Vol. III.)

216. *This is no my ain House.*

The first half-stanza is old, the rest is Ramsay's. The tune is an old Highland air, called *Shuan truish willighan.* The old words are:—

"O this is no my ain house, my ain house, my ain house,
This is no my ain house, I ken by the biggin o't.
There's bread and cheese are my door-cheeks, my door-cheeks, &c.,
There's bread and cheese are my door-cheeks, an' pancakes the riggin o't.

This is no my ain wean, my ain wean, my ain wean,
This is no my ain wean, I ken by the greetie o't,
I'll tak my curchie aff my head, aff my head, aff my head,
I'll tak my curchie aff my head, an row't about the feetie o't."

218. *Laddie, lie near me.*

This song ("Hark the loud tempest shakes") is by Blacklock.

220. *The Gardener wi' his paidle.*

The air is the "Gardener's March." The title of the song only is old; the rest is mine. (*See* page 67, Vol. III.)

224. *The Day returns, my Bosom burns.*

Tune—"Seventh of November."*

I composed this song out of compliment to one of the happiest and worthiest married couples in the world—Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in this country put together; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours of my life. (*See* page 18, Vol. III.)

226. *The Gaberlunzie Man.*

This song is supposed to commemorate an intrigue of James the V. Mr. Callander of Craigforth published, some years ago, an edition of "Christ's Kirk on the Green," and the "Gaberlunzie Man," with notes critical and historical. James the V. is said to have been fond of Gosford, in Aberlady Parish, and it was suspected by his contemporaries that in his frequent excursions to that part of the country he had other purposes in view besides golfing and archery.

Three favorite ladies, Sandilands, Weir, and Oliphant (one of whom resided at Gosford, and the others in the neighborhood), were occasionally visited by their royal and gallant admirer, which gave rise to the following satirical advice to his Majesty, from Sir David Lindsay, of the Mount; Lord Lyon:—

"Sow not your seed on Sandy lands,
Spend not your strength in Weir,
And ride not on an Elephant,
For spoiling o' your gear."

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*The 7th of November was the marriage day of the worthy couple, and the air was Mr. Riddell's composition.

228. *The Black Eagle.*

This song is by Dr. Fordyce, whose merits as a prose writer are well known.

229. *Jamie, come try me.*

This air is Oswald's; the song is mine. (*See* page 71, Vol. III.)

231. *My Bonie Mary.*

This air is Oswald's; the first half stanza:—

"Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonie lassie."

is old, the rest mine.

232. *The Lazy Mist.*

This song is mine. (*See* page 22, Vol. III.)

234. *Johnie Cope.*

This satirical song was composed to commemorate General Cope's defeat at Prestonpans in 1745, when he marched against the Clans. The air was the tune of an old song, of which I have heard some verses, but now only remember the title, which was "Will ye go to the coals in the morning?"

235. *I love my Jean.*

This air is by Marshall, the song I composed out of compliment to Mrs. Burns. *N.B.*—It was during the honeymoon. (*See* page 3, Vol. III.)

242. *The Mill, Mill, O.*

The original, or at least a song evidently prior to Ramsay's, is still extant. It runs thus:—

"As I cam down yon water side,
And by yon sheelin-hill, O,
There I spied a bonie, bonie lass,
And a lass that I loed right weel, O.

Chorus—The mill, mill, O, and the kill, kill, O,
And the coggin o' Peggy's wheel, O,
The sack and the sieve, an' a' she did leave,
For dancin' the miller's reel, O."*

246. *Cease, cease, my dear Friend.*

This song is by Dr. Blacklock; I believe, but am not quite certain, that the air is his too.

* The reader scarcely needs to be reminded that out of this rough material sprung the charming ballad, "The Soldier's Return."

247. *Auld Robin Gray.*

This air was formerly called "the Bridegroom greets when the sun gangs down."

250. *Tak your auld cloak about ye.*

A part of this old song, according to the English set of it, is quoted in Shakspeare. (*In the Drinking scene in Othello.*)

252. *Donald and Flora.*

This is one of those few Gaelic tunes, preserved from time immemorial in the Hebrides; they seem to be the ground-work of many of our finest Scots pastoral tunes.* The words of this song were written to commemorate the unfortunate expedition of General Burgoyne in America, in 1777.

255. *O were I on Parnassus Hill.*

This air is Oswald's: the song I made out of compliment to Mrs. Burns. (*See* page 20, Vol. III.)

257. *The Captive Ribband.*

This air is called *Robie donna Gorach.* (*See* page 112, Vol. III.)

258. *There's a Youth in this city.*

This air is claimed by Neil Gow, who calls it his Lament for his brother. The first half-stanza of the song is old; the rest is mine. (*See* page 79, Vol. III.)

259. *My Heart's in the Highlands.*

The first half-stanza of this song is old; the rest is mine. (*See* page 113, Vol. III.)

264. *Ca' the Ewes to the Knowes.*

This beautiful song is in the true old Scotch taste, yet I do not know that either air or words were in print before. (*See* page 101, Vol. III.)

269. *The Bridal o't.*

This song is the work of a Mr. Alexander Ross, late Schoolmaster at Lochlee; and author of a beautiful Scots poem, called "The Fortunate Shepherdess."

270. *The Bob o' Dumblane.*

Ramsay, as usual, has modernized this song. The original, which

* The very reverse seems to have been the case. The pastoral tunes of the lowlands travelled northwards, and became the groundwork of what are now styled "Gaelic melodies."

I learned on the spot, from my old hostess in the principal Inn there, is:—

"Lassie, lend me your braw hemp heckle,
And I'll lend you my thripplin-kame;
My heckle is broken, it canna be gotten,
And we'll gae dance the bob o' Dumblane.

Twa gaed to the wood, to the wood, to the wood,
Twa gaed to the wood—three came hame;
An it be na weel bobbit, weel bobbit, weel bobbit,
An it be na weel bobbit, we'll bob it again."

I insert this song to introduce the following anecdote, which I have heard well authenticated. In the evening of the day of the battle of Dunblane (Sheriff-muir), when the action was over, a Scots officer in Argyle's army, observed to his Grace, that he was afraid the rebels would give out to the world that *they* had gotten the victory. "Weel, weel," answered his Grace, alluding to the foregoing ballad, "if they think it be nae well bobbit, we'll bob it again."

271. *A Mother's Lament for the Death of her Son.*

Tune—"Finlayston House."

This most beautiful tune is, I think, the happiest composition of that bard-born genius, John Riddell, of the family of Glengarnock at Ayr. The words were composed to commemorate the much lamented and premature death of James Ferguson, Esq., junior, of Craigdarroch. (*See* page 19, Vol. III.)

275. *Todlen Hame.*

This is, perhaps, the *first** bottle song that ever was composed.

276. *The Braes o' Ballochmyle.*

This air is the composition of my friend Allan Masterton, in Edinburgh. I composed the verses on the amiable and excellent family of Whitefoord's leaving Ballochmyle, when Sir John's misfortunes had obliged him to sell the estate. (*See* page 141, Vol. I.)

278. *The Shepherd's Preference.*

This song is Blacklock's. I don't know how it came by the name, but the oldest appellation of the air was "Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad." It has little affinity to the tune commonly known by that name.

* First—Burns here means finest or best.—G. G.

282. *We ran, and they ran.*

The author was a Rev. Mr. Murdoch M'Lennan, minister at Crathie, Deeside.*

284. *The Bonie Banks of Ayr.*

I composed this song as I conveyed my chest so far on the road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica. I meant it as my farewell Dirge to my native land. (*See* page 35, Vol. II.)

285. *John o' Badenyond.*

This excellent song is the composition of my worthy friend, old Skinner at Linshart.

286. *The Rantin Dog the Daddie o't.*

I composed this song pretty early in life, and sent it to a young girl, a very particular acquaintance of mine, who was at that time under a cloud. (*See* page 248, Vol. I.)

288. *A Waukrife Minnie.*

I picked up this old song and tune from a country girl at Nithsdale. I never met with it elsewhere in Scotland. (*See* page 111, Vol. III.)

289. *Tullochgorum.*

This, first of songs, is the master-piece of my old friend Skinner. He was passing the day, at the town of Cullen I think it was, in a friend's house whose name was Montgomery. Mrs. Montgomery observing, *en passant*, that the beautiful reel of Tullochgorum wanted words, she begged them of Mr. Skinner, who gratified her wishes, and the wishes of every lover of Scottish song, in this most excellent ballad.

These particulars I had from the author's son, Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen.

290. *For a' that and a' that.*

This song is mine, all except the chorus. (*See* page 178, Vol. I.)

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* This clever ballad on the battle of Sheriff-muir, was printed by David Herd in 1769. Another song on the same subject, in form of a dialogue, was written by Mr. Barclay, the Berean minister in Edinburgh. Burns composed a ballad on the model of Mr. Barclay's. (*See* p. 106, Vol. III.)

291. *Willie brew'd a peck o' maut.*

This air is Masterton's; the song mine. The occasion of it was this:—Mr. Wm. Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, during the autumn vacation being at Moffat, honest Allan (who was at that time on a visit to Dalswinton) and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting that Mr. Masterton and I agreed, each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business. (*See* page 97, Vol. III.)

292. *The Braes o' Killiecrankie.*

The battle of Killiecrankie was the last stand made by the Clans for James, after his abdication. Here the gallant Lord Dundee fell in the moment of victory, and with him fell the hopes of the party. General M'Kay, when he found the Highlanders did not pursue his flying army, said, "Dundee must be killed, or he never would have overlooked this advantage." A great stone marks the spot where Dundee fell. (*See* page 108, Vol. III.)

293. *The Ewie wi' the crooked horn.*

Another excellent song of old Skinner's.

MUSEUM, Vol. IV. published 13th August 1792.

301. *Craigieburn Wood.*

It is remarkable of this air, that it is the confine of that country where the greatest part of our Lowland music (so far as from the title, words, &c., we can localize it) has been composed. From Craigieburn, near Moffat, until one reaches the West Highlands, we have scarcely one slow air of antiquity.

The song was composed on a passion which a Mr. Gillespie, a particular friend of mine, had for a Miss Lorimer, afterwards a Mrs. Whelpdale. The young lady was born in Craigieburn Wood. The chorus is part of an old foolish ballad. (*See* page 33, Vol. IV.)

302. *Frae the Friends and Land I love.*

I added the four last lines by way of giving a turn to the theme of the poem, such as it is. (*See* page 72, Vol. IV.)

303. *Hughie Graham.*

There are several editions of this ballad. This, here inserted, is from an oral tradition in Ayrshire, where, when I was a boy, it was a popular song. It originally had a simple old tune, which I have forgotten.

308. *A Southland Jenny.**

This is a popular Ayrshire song, though the notes were never taken down before. It, as well as many of the ballad tunes in this collection, was written down from Mrs. Burns's voice.

312. *My Tocher's the Jewel.*

This tune is claimed by Nathaniel Gow. It is notoriously taken from "The Muckin o' Geordie's Byre." It is also to be found, long prior to Nathaniel Gow's era, in Aird's selection of Airs and Marches, the first edition, under the name of "The Highway to Edinburgh." (*See* page 60, Vol. IV.)

313. *Then Gudewife count the lawin.*

The chorus of this is part of an old song, one stanza of which I recollect:—

"Every day my wife tells me
That ale and brandy will ruin me;
But if gude liquor be my dead,
This shall be written on my head—
Landlady, count the lawin," &c.

(*See* page 147, Vol. III.)

315. *There'll never be Peace till Jamie comes hame.*

This tune is sometimes called "There are few gude fellows when Willie's awa." But I never have been able to meet in with anything else of the song than the title. (*See* page 22, Vol. IV.)

321. *I do confess thou art so fair.*

This song is altered from a poem by Sir Robert Ayton, private secretary to Mary and Anne, Queens of Scotland. The poem is to be found in "Watson's collection of Scots Poems," the earliest collection printed in Scotland. I think that I have improved the simplicity of the sentiments by giving them a Scots dress. (*See* page 97, Vol. IV.)

323. *The Sodger Laddie.*

The first verse of this is old; the rest is by Ramsay. The tune seems to be the same with a slow air, called "Jackey Hume's Lament," or "The Hollin Buss," or "Ken ye what Meg o' the Mill has gotten?"

324. *Where wad bonie Annie lie.*

The old name of this tune is "Whare'll our Gudeman lie?" A silly old stanza of it ran thus:—

* First published by Ramsay in his "Tea-table Miscellany."

"O whare'll our Gudeman lie, Gudeman lie, Gudeman lie,
O whare'll our Gudeman lie, till he shute o'er the simmer?
Up amang the hen-bawks, the hen-bawks, the hen-bawks,
Up amang the hen-bawks, amang the rotten timmer."

325. *Galloway Tam.*

I have seen an interlude acted at a wedding, to this tune, called "The wooing of the Maiden." These entertainments are now much worn out in this part of Scotland. Two are still retained in Nithsdale, viz., "Sully puir Auld Glenae," and this one, "The wooing of the Maiden."

326. *As I cam down by yon castle wa'.*

This is a very popular Ayrshire song.

327. *Lord Ronald, my Son.*

This air, a very favorite one in Ayrshire, is evidently the original of "Lochaber." In this manner most of our finest more modern airs have had their origin. Some early minstrel composed the simple, artless original air; which being picked up by the more learned musician, took the improved form it bears.

328. *O'er the moor amang the heather.*

This song is the composition of a Jean Glover, a girl who was not only a wh——, but also a thief; and in one or other character has visited most of the Correction Houses in the west. She was born, I believe, in Kilmarnock. I took the song down from her singing as she was strolling through the country, with a slight-of-hand blackguard.

330. *To the Rosebud.*

"All hail to thee, thou balmy bud."

This song is the composition of a Mr. Johnson, a joiner in the neighborhood of Belfast. The tune is by Oswald, altered evidently from "Johnie's Grey Breeks."

331. *Yon wild mossy mountains.*

This tune is by Oswald. The song alludes to a part of my private history, which it is of no consequence to the world to know. (*See* page 54, Vol. II.)

332. *Jinglin Johnie.*

(Already discussed, under No. 21.)

333. *It is na, Jean, thy bonie face.*

These words were originally English verses; I gave them their Scots dress. (*See* page 23, Vol. III.)

336. *Eppie M'Nab.*

The old song with this title has more wit than decency. (*See* page 58, Vol. IV.)

337. *Wha is that at my bower door?*

This tune is also known by the name of "Lass an I come near thee." The words are mine. (*See* page 56, Vol. I.)

338. *Thou art gane away frae me, Mary.*

This tune is the same with "Haud awa frae me, Donald."

340. *The tears I shed must ever fall.*

This song of genius was composed by a Miss Cranstoun. It wanted four lines to make all the stanzas suit the music, which I added, and are the first four of the last stanza.*

341. *The bonie wee Thing.*

Composed on my little idol—"The charming, lovely Davies." (*See* page 36, Vol. IV.)

345. *The tither morn.*

This tune is originally from the Highlands. I have heard a Gaelic song to it, which I was told was very clever, but not by any means a lady's song. (*See* page 57, Vol. IV.)

361. *My Collier Laddie.*

I do not know a blyther old song than this. (*See* page 102, Vol. IV.)

373. *A Posie to my ain dear May.*

It appears evident to me that Oswald composed his "Roslin Castle" on the modulation of this air. In the second part of Oswald's, in the first three bars, he has either hit on a wonderful similarity to, or else he has entirely borrowed the first three bars of the old air; and the close of both tunes is almost exactly the same. The old verses to which it was sung, when I took down

* See page 118, Vol. IV. This authoress, in July 1790 became the second wife of Professor Dugald Stewart.

the notes from a country girl's voice, had no great merit. The following is a specimen :—

There was a pretty May, and a milkin she went,
Wi her red rosy cheeks, and her coal-black hair;
And she met a young man a comin o'er the bent,
*With a double and adieu to thee fair May.**

O where are ye goin, my ain pretty maid,
Wi thy red rosy cheeks, and thy coal-black hair?
Unto the yowes a milkin', kind sir, she said,
[For its rolling on the dew makes the milkmaids fair?]

What if I gang alang wi thee, my ain pretty maid,
Wi thy red rosy cheeks, and thy coal-black hair?
Wad I be aught the warse o' that, kind sir, she said,
[An' its rolling on the dew makes the milkmaids fair.]†

O tell me thy fortune, my ain pretty maid,
With thy red rosy cheeks, and thy coal-black hair!
My face it is my fortune, and quite enough, she said,
O its rolling on the dew makes the milkmaids fair.

I fear I cannot marry thee, my ain pretty maid,
With thy red rosy cheeks, and thy coal-black hair!
You'll wait until I ask you, silly sir, she said,
It is rolling on the dew makes the milkmaids fair!

448. *The bonie lass made the bed to me.*

This was composed on an amour of Charles II. when sculking in the North, about Aberdeen, in the time of the Usurpation. He formed *une petite affaire* with a daughter of the House of Portletham, who was "the lass that made the bed" to him.‡ (*See* page 83, Vol. VI.)

The foregoing annotations were twice published by Cromek, first in the "Reliques," 1808, and next in two volumes, produced in 1810, under the title of "SELECT SCOTTISH SONGS, ancient and modern, with critical observations and Biographical notices by ROBERT BURNS." The text of the songs was em-

* The "country girl" from whose singing the words were noted down, had only caught the *sound* of the proper refrain here, which goes thus :—

"And its rolling on the dew makes the milkmaids fair!"

† Burns omitted the two verses which complete the song; some of our readers will recognise this ballad as a Scotch version of an old English one, having the same point :—"My face it is my fortune."

‡ The footnote to song XXI. will account for this annotation by Burns to a song which was not published till after his death.

braced in the latter work, and, with the assistance of Allan Cunningham, a considerable number of fresh notes, and songs not contained in *Johnson*, were introduced to swell the volumes, which *externally* present a very handsome appearance. Unfortunately, however, several of the head-notes given there as the work of Burns, seem to be the deliberate manufacture of Cromek's young co-adjutor. The result has been very confusing; for some of these spurious remarks on Song are quoted as utterances of Burns down to the present day. The poet's manuscript of the genuine notes is still in existence; but we have not succeeded in getting access to it. Nevertheless, without obtaining the advantage of a collation, we can, from the mere style and matter of the spurious notes, point them out with tolerable precision. Those readers who possess Cromek's "Select Scottish Songs" may look at and beware of the headnotes to the following:—

Vol. I.	page	45.	The Boatie Rows	(Number in Johnson)	427
,,	,,	61.	Yestreen I had a pint o' wine	,,	500
,,	,,	75.	O Bothwell Bank	,,	513
,,	,,	93.	Maggie Lauder	,,	544
,,	,,	117.	Gude yill comes, and gude yill goes	,,	542
,,	,,	127.	Braw lads o' Gala Water	,,	125
Vol. II.	,,	9.	My Collier Laddie	,,	361
,,	,,	35.	The Blythesome Bridal—2d paragraph	,,	58
,,	,,	40.	Can ye labour lea, young man	,,	394
,,	,,	53.	Woo'd an' married an' a'	,,	10
,,	,,	59.	Muirland Willie	,,	369
,,	,,	64.	The Smiling Plains	,,	204
,,	,,	67.	The Flowers of the Forest	,,	63
,,	,,	113.	The lovely lass of Inverness	,,	401
,,	,,	129.	When she cam ben she bobbit	,,	353
,,	,,	133.	Louis, what reck I by thee?	,,	414
,,	,,	133.	Lady Mary Ann	,,	377
,,	,,	148.	Andro wi' his cutty gun	,,	180
,,	,,	156.	The Bonie Earl of Murray	,,	177
,,	,,	163.	The Carl of Kellyburn Braes	,,	379
,,	,,	171.	O for ane and twenty, Tam	,,	355
,,	,,	173.	Logan Braes	,,	42

We observed in a newspaper notice that in 1870, the four interesting volumes of Johnson's *Museum*, in which Burns inserted his annotations for Captain Riddell, were exposed for sale by Mr. John Salkeld, London, along with some other books from the Riddell collection, at the upset price of one hundred and ten guineas. An examination of these would at once confirm or disprove the correctness of our surmises concerning the preceding black list.

The reference to "Mrs. Whelpdale," in the poet's note to Song 301, proves that these annotations were not finished till the latter part of 1793. When Cromek's *Reliques of Burns*

first appeared, the "Remarks on Scottish Songs" was the portion which attracted most attention from lovers of ballad-literature. We have seen a letter addressed by Henry Mackenzie to Dr. Anderson of Edinburgh, which thus gives an estimate of the work:—"I thank you particularly for the *Reliques of Burns*, which are undoubtedly genuine, and breathe the same genius, and the same infirmities, with his former works. I will say a little of it. More science and better company, with his father's worth and sound principles, would have made him one of the best poets this country has produced. He is a bigot for laxity, religious and moral; and hence that jumble of sentiments! After telling me of his father's conversion to Socinianism, he added—'but he continued a *Calvinist* in his manners and conversation.' The thing I like best in these *Reliques* is the account of Scottish Songs, which coincides with my own sentiments and theories. His curt, sarcastic remarks are truly characteristic; although some of them may be a little inaccurate."

THE GLENRIDDELL MSS.

Among the friends whom Burns treasured in "his heart of heart" none ranked higher than Robert Riddell of Glenriddell. Burns thus refers to him in a note to his song "The day returns, my bosom burns:" "I composed this song out of compliment to one of the worthiest married couples in the world—Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in this country put together: and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours of my life." (*See* page 18, Vol. III.)

Captain Riddell was in some respects a kindred spirit with Burns, a poet and a lover of poetry. Burns delighted to consult him on his literary performances, prose and poetry; and wrote for the pleasure and advice of Captain Riddell copies of the letters and poems which have subsequently become known as The Glenriddell MSS.

On the death of Burns they were entrusted by the descendants of Captain Riddell to Dr. Currie, who edited the first complete edition of the poet's works in 1800. After Currie's death they passed into the hands of his son, the late William Wallace Currie, by whose widow they were presented to the Liverpool Athenæum Library. The complete catalogue of those MSS. will be found on the following four pages.

THE GLENRIDDELL MSS. OF BURNS'S POEMS,

IN THE ATHENÆUM LIBRARY, LIVERPOOL.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE CONTENTS.

1. Epitaph on Mr. William Muir, Tarbolton.
2. Paraphrase on Jeremiah xv. 10.†
3. A Poet's Welcome to his love-begotten daughter.†
4. Holy Willie's Prayer.†
5. The Belles of Mauchline.†
6. Epistle to John Goldie, in Kilmarnock.†
7. Extempore to Mr. M'Adam of Craigengillan.
8. Inscription—"Once fondly loved, and still remembered."
9. Extempore stanzas on Naething.
10. Verses on the death of John Macleod, Esq.
11. On the death of Sir James Hunter Blair, Bart.
12. Copy of the Author's Autobiographical Letter.
13. Lines written by Somebody on a window at Stirling.
14. Written in the Hermitage at Taymouth.
15. Humble Petition of Bruar Water.
16. Lines written at the Fall of Fyers.
17. On Scaring Waterfowl on Loch Turit.
18. Lines by Clarinda—On Burns saying he had "nothing else to do."†
19. Answer to the foregoing—extempore.†
20. The Chevalier's Birthday Ode, 31 Dec. 1787.
21. On the death of Lord President Dundas.†
22. Lines written at Friars Carse Hermitage, 1st version.†
23. Song—"Anna, thy charms," &c.†
24. Lines written at Friars Carse Hermitage, 2nd version.
25. First Epistle to Mr. Graham of Fintry—"When Nature," &c.
26. Ode on Mrs. Oswald of Auchincruive.
27. Address to Miss Cruikshank—"Beauteous Rosebud."†
28. Ode to the departed Regency Bill.†
29. A new Psalm for the Chapel of Kilmarnock.†
30. Epigram on Captain Grose.†
31. On Captain Grose's peregrinations.†
32. The Kirk of Scotland's Alarm.†
33. Lines to Mr. Graham of Fintry—"I call no Goddess."†
34. The Whistle—a Ballad.†
35. The Five Carlines—a Ballad.†

36. Song—"Yestreen I had a pint o' wine."†
37. Song—"I murder hate by flood and field."†
38. Election Ballad—"Fintry my stay in worldly strife."†
39. Ken ye ought o' Captain Grose?†
40. Tam o' Shanter—a Tale.
41. Sweet Flow'ret, pledge o' meikle luve.†
42. Lament of Mary, Queen of Scots.
43. Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn.†
44. Lines to Sir John Whitefoord.†
45. On Glenriddell's Fox breaking his chain.†
46. Second Epistle to Mr. Graham of Fintry—"Late crippled."†
47. Grace before Dinner—"O Thou, who kindly," &c.†

EPIGRAMS.*

48. Ask why God made the gem so small.†
49. That there is falsehood in his looks.†
50. Light lay the earth on Billy's breast.
51. Stop thief! dame Nature called to Death.†
52. What Lascelles thought fit from this world.†
53. If you rattle along like your Mistress's tongue.†
54. Here lies John Bushby, *honest* man.†
55. When Morine deceas'd, to the devil went down.†
56. Bless Jesus Christ, O Cardoness !†

Those pieces marked thus †, are in the poet's autograph. The others are in the handwriting of an amanuensis, who was a young Licentiate of the Church; but his name is nowhere indicated.

THE GLENRIDDELL MSS. OF BURNS'S LETTERS.

IN THE ATHENÆUM LIBRARY, LIVERPOOL.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE CONTENTS.

1. Abridged copy of the Author's first Common-place Book.
2. To John Arnot of Dalquhatswood, Esq., April 1786.
3. To Mrs. Stewart of Stair, 1786.

* Burns seems to have finished his work of transcribing these poems in Mr. Riddell's book before leaving Ellisland about the close of the year 1791. The Epigrams, however, must have been added, on receiving back the book, after Mr. Riddell's death, in April 1794. The color of the ink and different character of penmanship seems to infer this fact; but the introduction of the ill-natured epigram, No. 53, against Mrs. Walter Riddell, renders the matter certain.

4. To Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, enclosing song "The Lass o' Ballochmyle," 18 Nov. 1786.
5. To Mr. Wm. Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, 1 June 1787.
6. To John M'Murdo, Esq., Drumlanrig, with a song, January 1789.
7. To my friend Cunningham, on his severe love-disappointment, 24 Jan. 1789.
8. To the Right Hon. William Pitt—an Address from the Scottish Distillers, Feb. 1789.
9. To Miss H. C———, (Craik) "1789 or 90."
10. To Crawford Tait, Esq., W.S., 15 Oct. 1790.
11. To Charles Sharpe, Esq., of Hoddam, April 22, 1791.
12. To Alex. Cunningham, Esq., Edinburgh, introducing Clarke the Schoolmaster, June 1791.
13. Letter dictated from Clarke, addressed to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, June 1791.
14. To the Rev. Mr. Moodie, Edinburgh, in behalf of Clarke, the Schoolmaster, June 1791.
15. To Miss Davies, enclosing a ballad I had made on her, [July] 1791.
16. Letter dictated for Clarke, to Mr. Williamson, factotum and favorite of the Earl of Hopetoun, 1791.
17. To Mr. Corbet, Supervisor-General of Excise, 1791.
18. To Mr. Smellie, printer, Edinburgh, introducing Mrs. Walter Riddell, Jan. 1792.
19. To the Duke of Queensberry, with "The Whistle," 1792.
20. To Mr. Alex. Cunningham, Writer, Edinburgh, some little time after his marriage, Sep. 10, 1792.
21. To Mr. Corbet, Supervisor-General of Excise—thanks for granting request in No. 17, Sep. 1792.
22. Letter from Mr. Nicol, alluding to some temeraire conduct of mine in the political opinions of the day, 10 Feb. 1790.
23. Reply to the foregoing, Feb. 1792.
24. Letter to a Lady, (Clarinda), March 1793. *I suppose, my dear Madam.*
    (Never scrolled, but copied from the original letter.)*
25. To the Earl of Glencairn (with copy of my new edition), 1793.
26. To John F. Erskine, Esq., of Mar, 13th April 1793.
27. To Miss Lesley Baillie of Mayfield, 1793.
28. To Miss M'Murdo, with a Ballad, made in compliment to her, July 1793.

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* In Dr. Currie's hand, a note occurs here :—
"These Letters appear to be nearly the worst he wrote.—J. C."

[The following autograph note by Burns at the end of letter No. 12, to Dr. Moore, is very characteristic; it doubtless refers to the "young Licentiate of the Church" in note page 414, *supra*:—]

"Know all whom it may concern, that I, the Author, am not answerable for the false spelling and injudicious punctuation in the foregoing transcript of my letter to Dr. Moore I have something generous in my temper that cannot bear to see or hear the Absent wronged, and I am very much hurt to observe that in several instances the transcriber has injured and mangled the proper name and principal title of a Personage of the very first distinction in all that is valuable among men—antiquity, abilities and power; (virtue, everybody knows, is an obsolete business) I mean, the Devil. Considering that the transcriber was one of the clergy, an order who owe the very bread they eat to the said Personage's exertions, the affair was absolutely unpardonable.—Ro. B."

On the title-page of this volume is the inscription—"LETTERS BY MR. BURNS, which he selected for Robt. Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, F.A.S. of London and Edinburgh, and member of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester." Under the title is pasted down an impression of Beugo's engraved head of the Bard, beneath which is written in ornamental letters—

"Robertus Burns, Scotus."

As will be seen by a reference to the letters to Miss —— and David Hill, pages 134 and 135, Vol. VI., these prose MS. copies of letters, which, though intended for Robert Riddell, were never delivered to him (see letter to Hill); therefore, by the publication of the letter to Hill referred to, we somewhat unsettle the title "Glenriddell MSS.," so far as the letters are concerned.—G. G.

Pasted on the inside of the board is the following holograph letter of the widow of Dr. Currie's son, Mr. Wallace Currie:—

"TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE ATHENÆUM, LIVERPOOL.

ELLERSLIE, *Dec.* 6, 1853.

SIR,—Will you allow me to make you the medium of presenting to the Athenæum Library two Manuscript Books in his own writing, of Poems and Letters of Burns. I believe they came into possession of Dr. Currie when he was engaged in writing the Life of the Poet, and I shall feel gratified by their finding a place in the Library of an Institution in which he took so great an interest.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

S. CURRIE."

END OF VOL. V.

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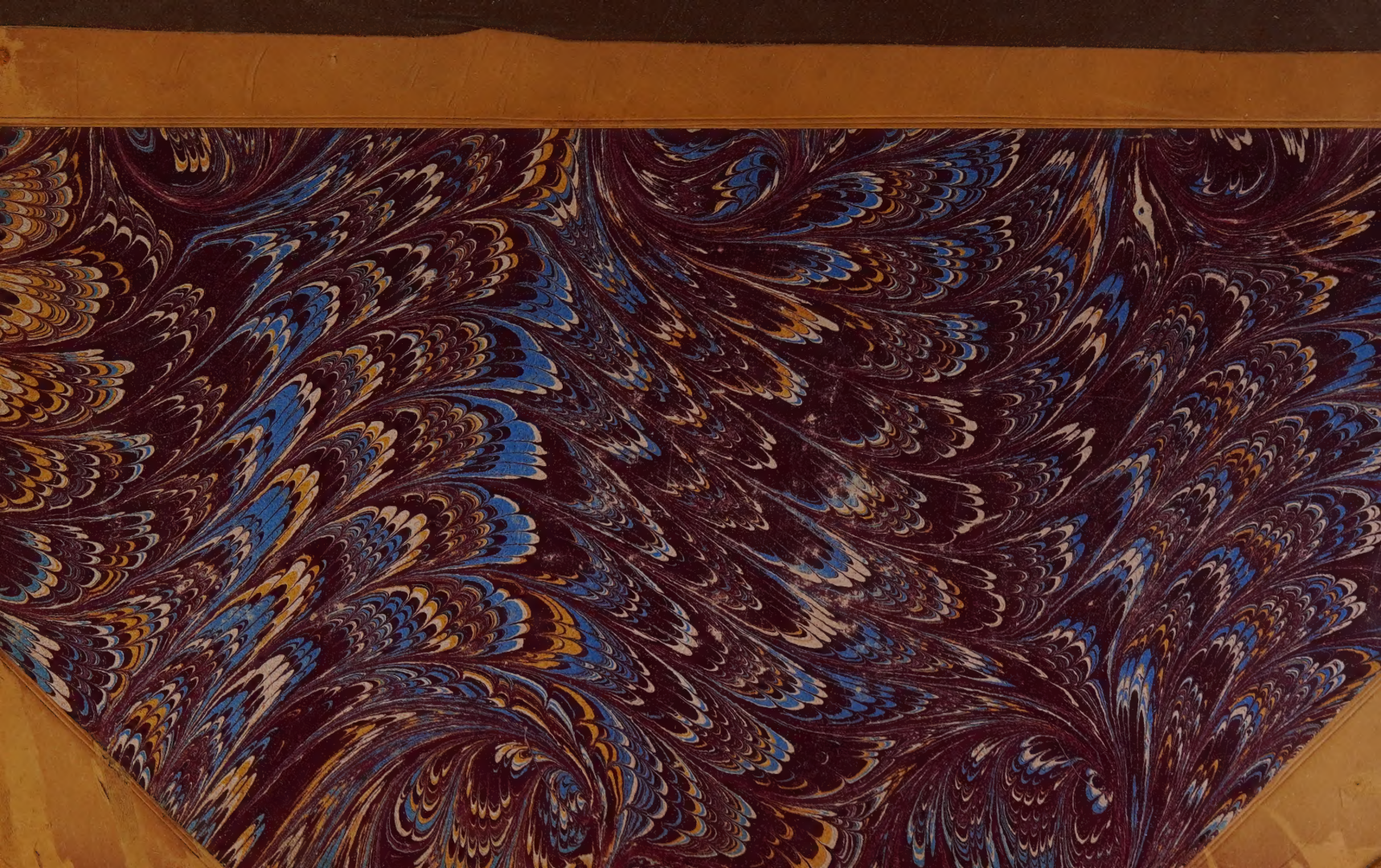
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